Real Rock Guitar

CD INCLUD

A Classic Rock Bible of the '60s and '70

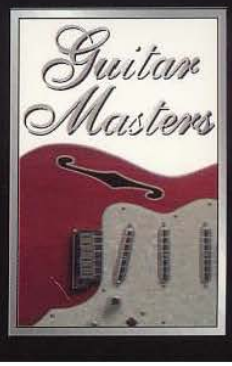
by Kenn Chipkin

The most complete and authentic guide to the greatest classic rock guitar licks ever played!

Including the licks, styles, and techniques of:

- Duane Allman
- Jeff Beck
- Eric Clapton
- Billy Gibbons
- Peter Green
- Jimmy Page
- Keith Richards
- Johnny Winter

and many more



MUSIC

Real Rock Guitar

A Classic Rock Bible of the '60s and '70s

by Kenn Chipkin

Editor: Aaron Stang
Cover Design: Joann Carrera

WARNER BROS. PUBLICATIONS
Warner Music Group
An AOL Time Warner Company
USA: 15800 NW 48th Avenue, Miami, FL 33014

IMP
INTERNATIONAL MUSIC PUBLICATIONS LIMITED
ENGLAND: GRIFFIN HOUSE,
161 HAMMERSMITH ROAD, LONDON W6 8BS

© 1994, Revised 2003 WARNER BROS. PUBLICATIONS
All Rights Reserved

Any duplication, adaptation or arrangement of the compositions
contained in this collection requires the written consent of the Publisher.
No part of this book may be photocopied or reproduced in any way without permission.
Unauthorized uses are an infringement of the U.S. Copyright Act and are punishable by law.

CONTENTS

	Page #	CD Track
INTRODUCTION	4	
Intro Music		1
Tuning Notes		2
PART I: RHYTHM PARTS		
The Boogie Pattern	5	
Example 1	5	3
Example 2	6	4
The Power 5th Chord	8	
Example 3	8	5
Example 4	9	6
Example 5	10	7
Example 6	11	8
Example 7	11	9
Major Triads, Dominant 7th and Dominant 9th Chords		
Major Triads	12	
Example 8	12	10
Example 9	13	11
Example 10	14	12
Dominant 7th Chords	16	
Example 11	16	13
Example 12	17	14
Example 13	19	15
Example 14	20	16
Example 15	21	17
Dominant 7th (♭)	21	
Example 16	21	18
Example 17	22	19
The Dominant 9th Chord	23	
Example 18	23	20
Example 19	24	21
Example 20	25	22
The Dominant 7 (#9) Chord	25	
Example 21	26	23
Example 22	27	24
Example 23	28	25
Example 24	29	26
Example 25	30	27
Example 26	31	28
The Minor Triad	33	
Example 27	33	29
Example 28	34	30
Example 29	35	31
Example 30	36	32
Example 31	37	33
Example 32	38	34
Example 33	39	35
Example 34	40	36
Example 35	41	37
PART II: RIFFS		
Pentatonic Minor	42	
Example 36	42	38
Example 37	43	39
Example 38	44	40
Example 39	46	41
Example 40	46	42
Blues Scale Riffs	48	
Example 41	48	43
Example 42	49	44
Example 43	49	45
Example 44	50	46
Example 45	51	47
Riff/Chord Combos	53	
Example 46	53	48
Example 47	54	49
Example 48	55	50
Example 49	55	51
Example 50	57	52
Example 51	58	53
Example 52	59	54
Example 53	60	55
Example 54	61	56
Example 55	61	57
Example 56	62	58
Double Stop Riffs Based On The Mixolydian Mode	64	
Example 57	64	59
Example 58	64	60
Example 59	65	61
Example 60	66	62
PART III: BLUES/ROCK LEAD GUITAR		
The Pentatonic Minor Scale	67	
Example 61	67	63
Example 62	68	64
The Pentatonic Major Scale	70	
Example 63	70	
Example 64	70	
Example 65	71	65
The Mixolydian Mode	71	
Example 66	71	66
PART IV: GUITAR GREATS, U.S. TO U.K.		
The Allman Brothers	72	67
Jeff Beck	77	68
Eric Clapton	81	69
Jimmy Page	85	70
Johnny Winter	90	71
Billy Gibbons (ZZ Top)	94	72
Jimi Hendrix	98	73
The Rolling Stones	106	74
Appendix I	112	
Appendix II	113	
Guitar Tab Glossary	118	

INTRODUCTION

The *blues/rock* guitar style is set apart by its fusion of two related but very different genres: blues and rock. The expression goes, "Blues had a baby and named it rock and roll." This is a "black and white statement"—literally. The blues began as music played by and for blacks only (up until the early '60s, blues and R & B were termed "race" music and were marketed only to a black audience via "race" record labels, music stores and radio stations).

It wasn't until the 1950s that black music became popular with white audiences (often filtered through white artists heavily influenced by black music: Elvis Presley, Bill Haley, etc.) and in doing so, the cultural walls of "popular" (white) and blues (black) music began to crumble. Rock and roll is a cultural collaboration (the illegitimate child of a black/white union) and from its inception, rock and roll misfits and soul-searching white musicians have been borrowing heavily from the pure blues, unintentionally forging a new style.

A child can imitate its parent to whatever lengths it chooses, while simultaneously finding its own path in realizing its identity. Acceptance is had either way, but ultimately, blues is blues and rock is rock. That is why blues/rock is identifiable as having its own separate identity.

The influence blues has had on rock is as undeniable as it is advantageous. The main advantage being the ability of blues/rock to extend, or even sever, its long-established roots in the blues language while still maintaining its audience appeal, as well as the interest and respect of blues musicians themselves.

A comparison of the "blues/rock" material represented in this book to that of the traditional, "pure" blues of guitarists such as T-Bone Walker, B.B. King or Albert King will immediately show clear dividing lines between the styles.* Amazingly, blues/rock has had a reverse influential effect on many of the great blues guitarists who were the original impetus for this new musical form. Muddy Waters called Johnny Winter "his son," and the two often played and recorded together in the last years of Waters' life. B.B. King, Albert King, Buddy Guy and Albert Collins have all sung high praises for Eric Clapton and Stevie Ray Vaughan—and these older blues musicians have found their music and even their playing affected by the new fires set by blues/rockers. Compare old and new recordings of the blues guitarists mentioned, and you will hear their blues "modernized."

The U.S. to U.K. Connection

Although blues is primarily a Black-American music form, blues/rock is a cross-cultural and cross-continental phenomenon. By the '60s, black music had clearly crossed over into the American mainstream. Many white musicians were not only influenced by black music but were heavily involved in both blues and R&B. But still, the early '60s American music scene shows clear dividing lines between pop, rock, blues and R&B. It took a new generation of young, white English musicians who had grown up listening to American blues artists to actually fuse the two forms together. They joined the songs, licks and riffs of their idols, like Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, B.B. King, Freddie King and Buddy Guy with the volume, energy and attitude of the rock generation. It is from this unique black/white, American/British union that bands like The Yardbirds, The Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, Cream, Deep Purple and even the Beatles were born.

Kenn Chipkin
Aaron Stang

*(See Real Blues Guitar, published by Warner Bros. Publications, Inc. for a full examination of blues guitar).

PART I: RHYTHM PARTS

This section deals with the foundation of the blues/rock style: *rhythm guitar playing*. The following examples are derived from the music of many well-known groups and players, and are in many cases identifiable as the main thrust behind important songs. These examples illustrate the common threads that weave through the blues/rock style.

The Boogie Pattern

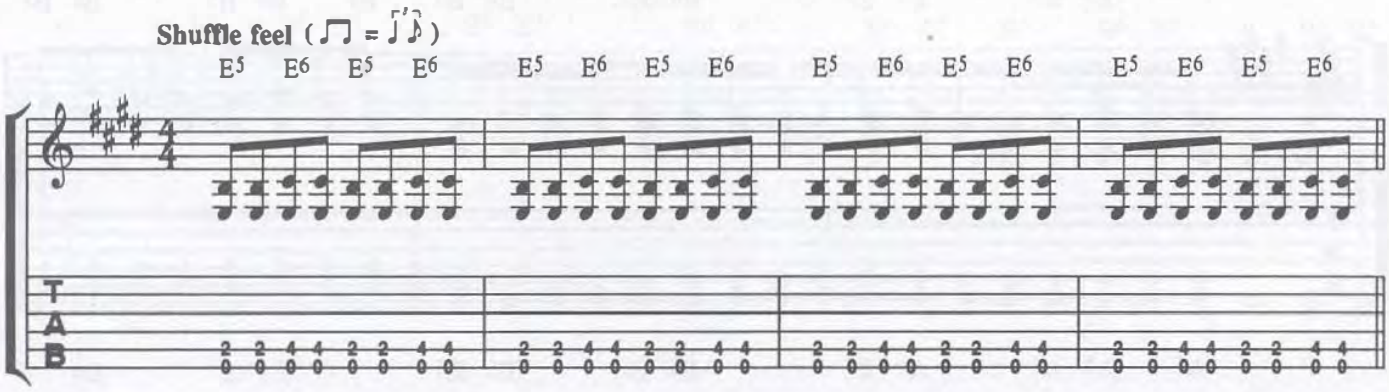
The boogie pattern may be the single most identifiable feature of the blues, dating back to the Delta-blues style of guitarist/singer Robert Johnson. This pattern is common to virtually all styles of music, and is especially connected to the guitar—its main advocate.

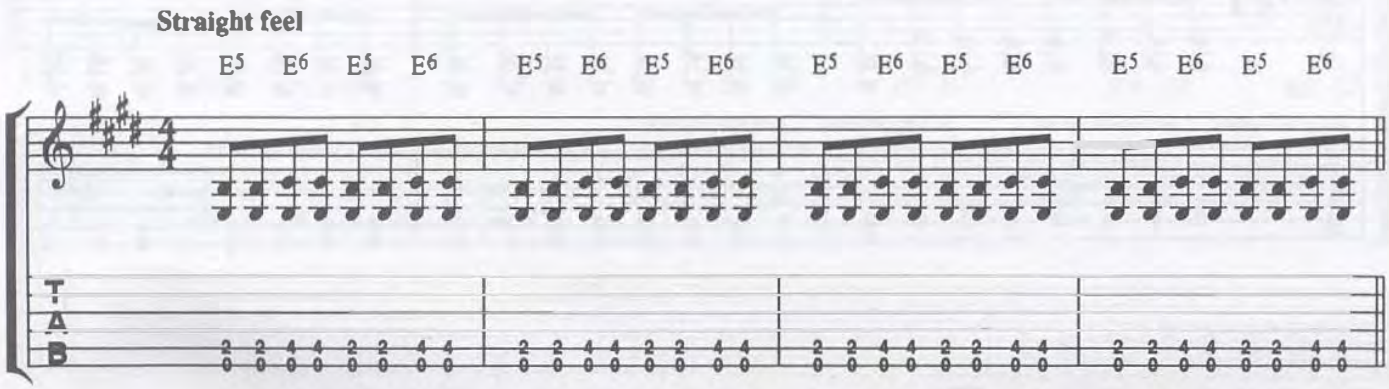
Chuck Berry is widely known to have exploited the boogie pattern a great deal in the early stages of rock and roll. Berry's aggressive approach to guitar playing has had a profound effect on all those who have followed. He basically took the boogie pattern, a blues staple, changed it from a shuffle to a straight-eighth feel, and put a fire under it. Once Chuck got it cooking there was no way to turn it back down. The flame continued to grow hotter as the feel continuously grew more aggressive and loud.

Almost all of the examples in this section make use of the boogie figure.

Example 1

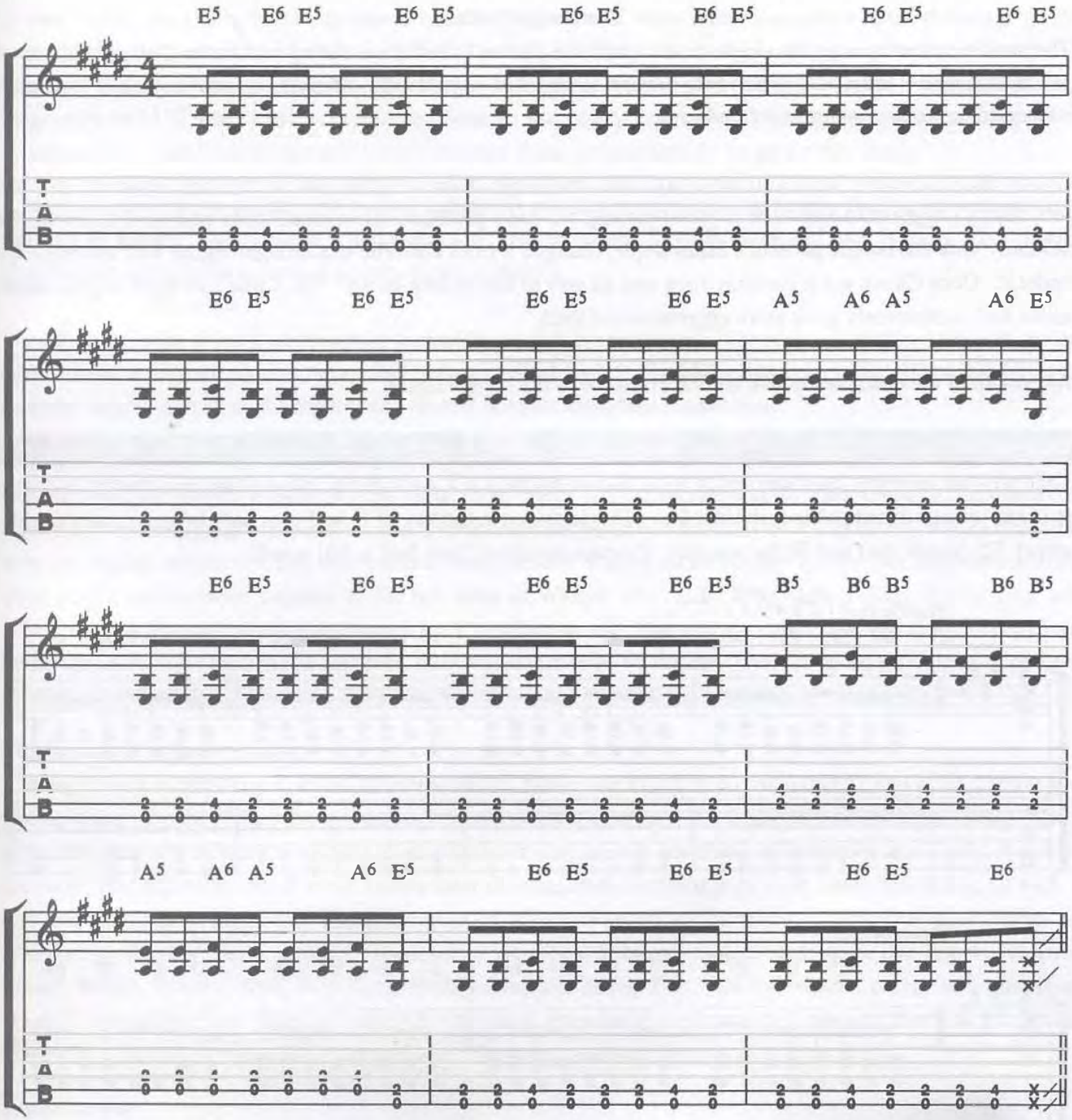
This two-part example demonstrates a basic boogie figure a la Chuck Berry, played first in a shuffle feel, then (without change of tempo) in a straight feel. This is played in the key of E, and uses only two chords (or double-stops): E5 (power 5th) and E6 (power 6th). Practice switching from feel to feel at will.

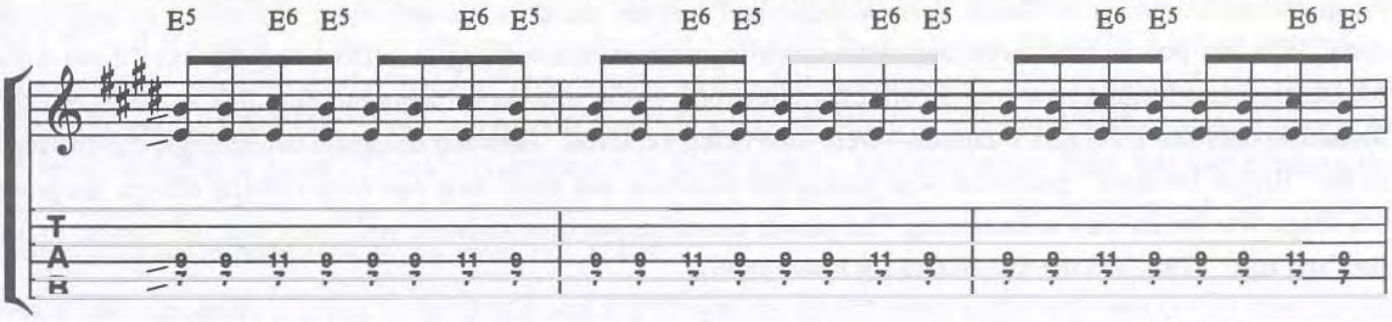


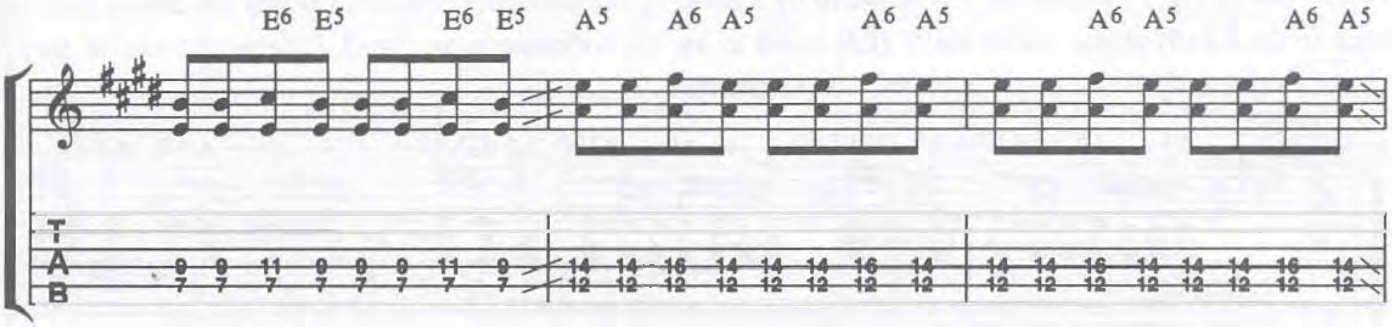


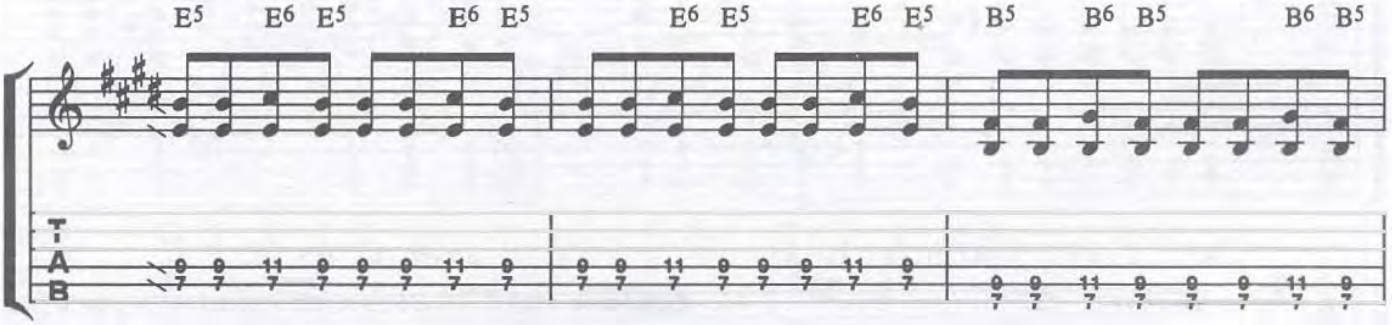
Example 2

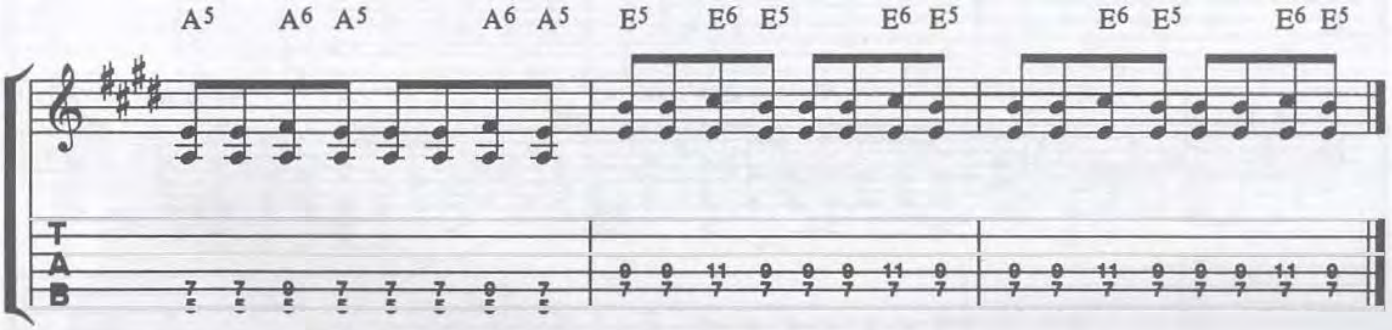
This example makes use of a few different power 5th and power 6th double-stops on different string groups in the context of a 12-bar blues progression in E. Consider this a primer for the examples that will follow. Note the straight eighth feel.




E5 E6 E5 E6 E5 E6 E5 E6 E5 E6 E5 E6 E5
T
A
B


E6 E5 E6 E5 A5 A6 A5 A6 A5 A6 A5 A6 A5
T
A
B


E5 E6 E5 E6 E5 E6 E5 E6 E5 B5 B6 B5 B6 B5
T
A
B

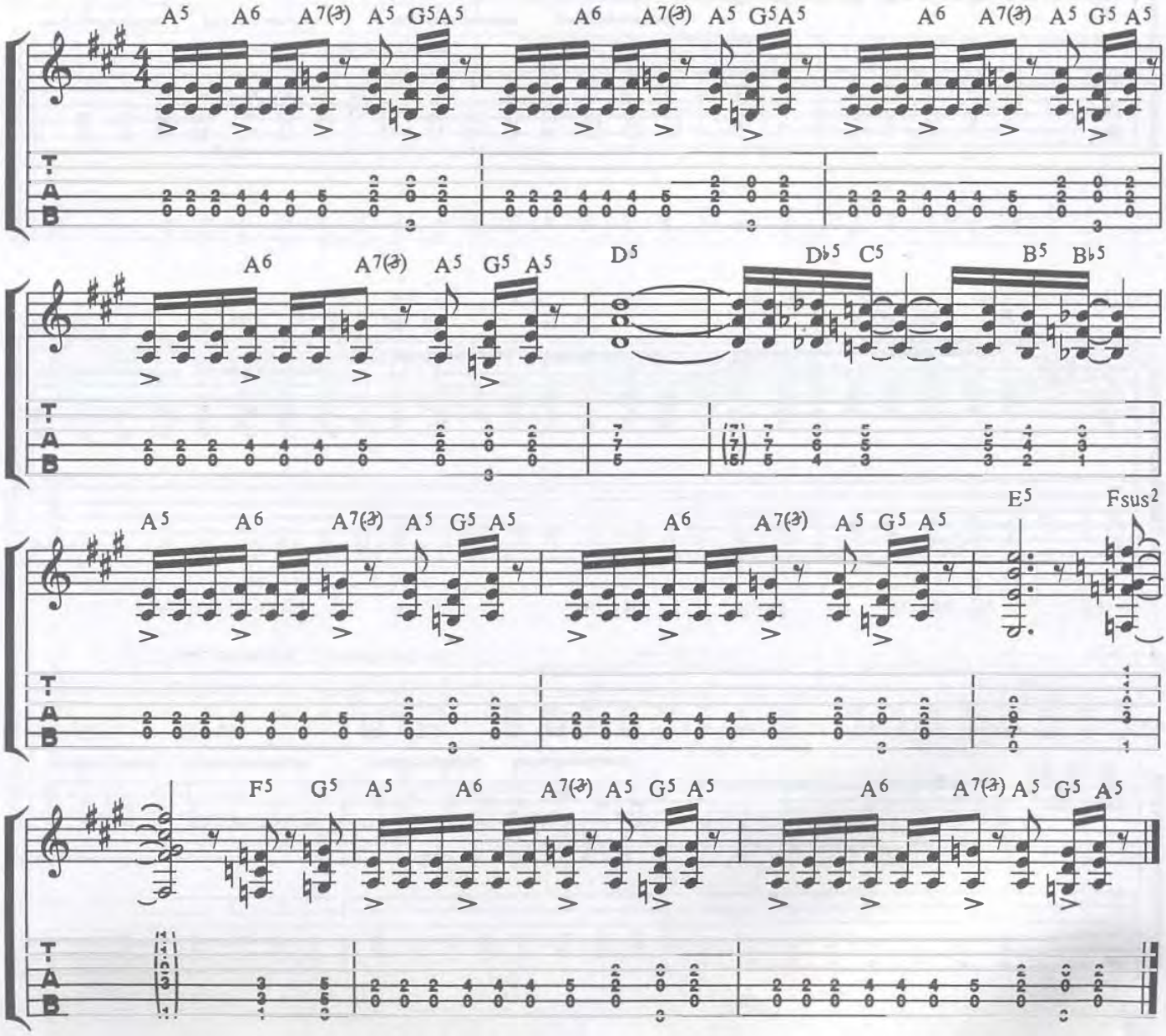

A5 A6 A5 A6 A5 E5 E6 E5 E6 E5 E6 E5 E6 E5
T
A
B

The Power 5th Chord

As guitarists caught on to Chuck Berry's sound and attitude, the door opened wider and wider, so that by the early '60s the power 5th shape began to carve its own path, breaking free from the typical 12-bar blues progression and forging new-found harmonic directions. New root movements utilizing this shape—not being limited to only the I, IV and V chords-—were now being explored. Between domestic happenings, the onslaught of the "British Invasion" combined with maximum distortion and many new and experimental effects, the power 5th shape was on its way to becoming "the power chord" as we now know it, and "rock and roll" began to lose the "and roll." This laid the foundation for heavy metal.

Example 3

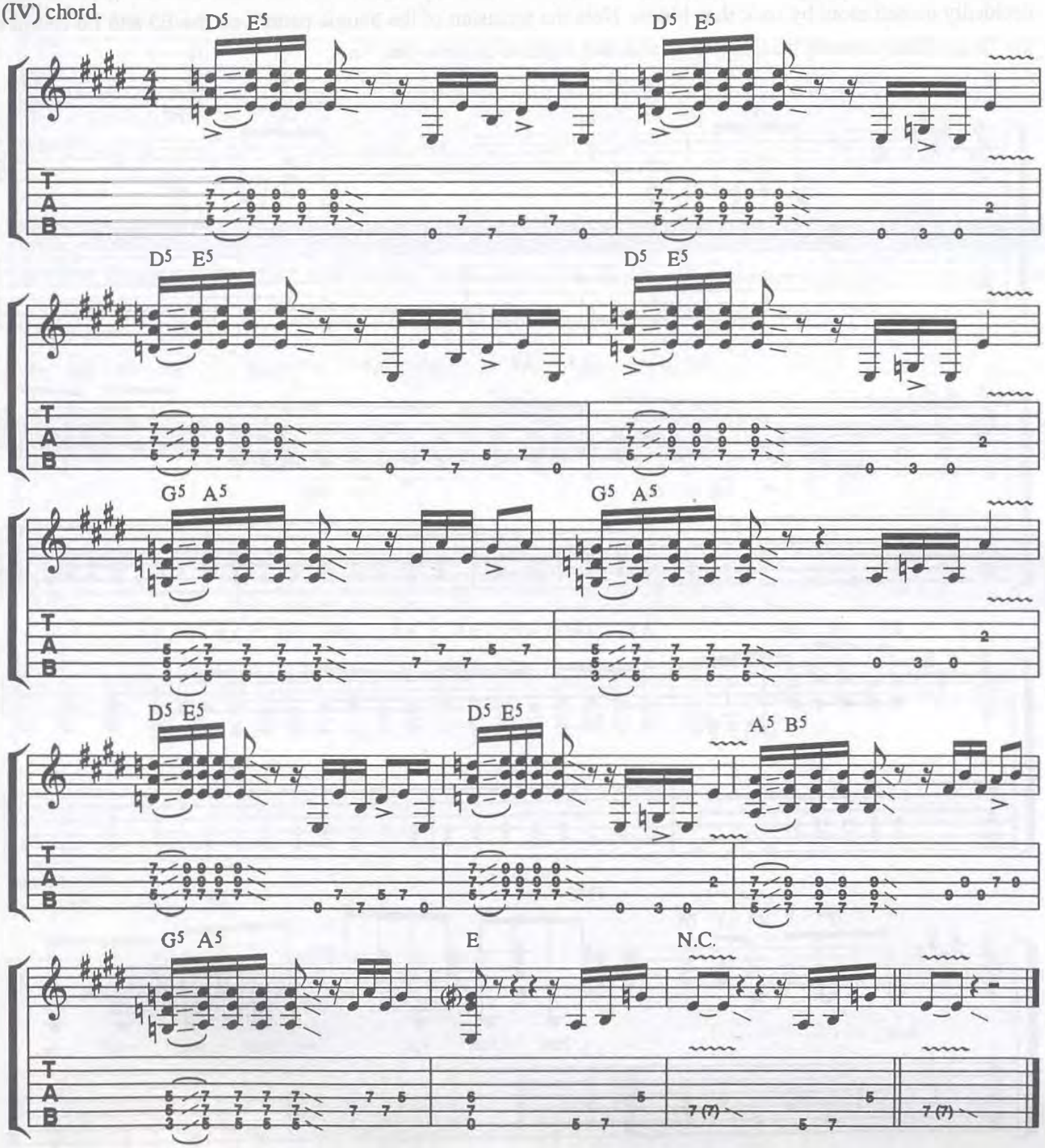
This example in the style of Led Zeppelin, begins as a power 5th chord in the key of A, branching out to power 6th and power 7th chords as well. The chord progression stands as a perfect model of a "12-bar blues with a twist." The IV (D5) chord in bar 5 is followed by a string of chromatically connected power 5th chords resolving back to the I (A5) chord. After the V (E5) chord in bar 10, we come to an Fsus2, F being the root of the ♭VI chord, a commonly found chord in blues/rock progressions.



Example 4

Another "12-bar blues with a twist," this famous rhythm part in the style of Leslie West of Mountain, has each of the I, IV and V chords (all power 5th types) approached by a slide from a power 5th chord a whole step below. This puts great emphasis on the "outside" chords being as they fall on downbeats. The two outside chords are the ♭VII (D5) and the ♭III (G5). These two roots (♭7 and ♭3) are great pillars of blues/rock progressions and may be the most identifiable proof of rock's contribution to blues forms. The single-line licks that fall between the power chords are derived from the E pentatonic minor scale (E G A B D) with the exception of "C," which is derived from the A pentatonic minor scale (A C D E G).

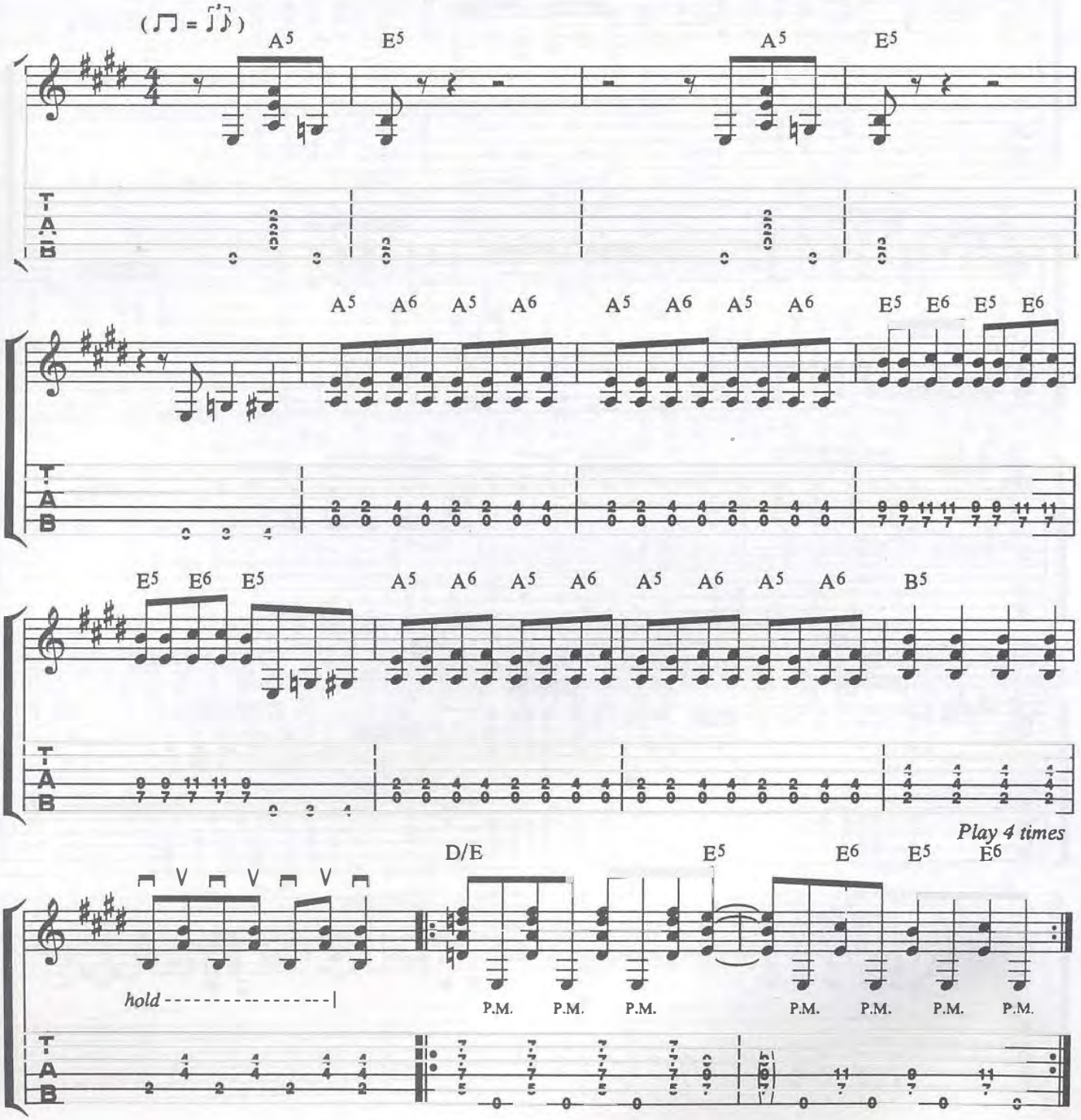
Notice how emphasis is given to the G (♭3) and D (♭7) over the E5 (I) chord and C (♭3) and G (♭7) over the A5 (IV) chord.



Example 5

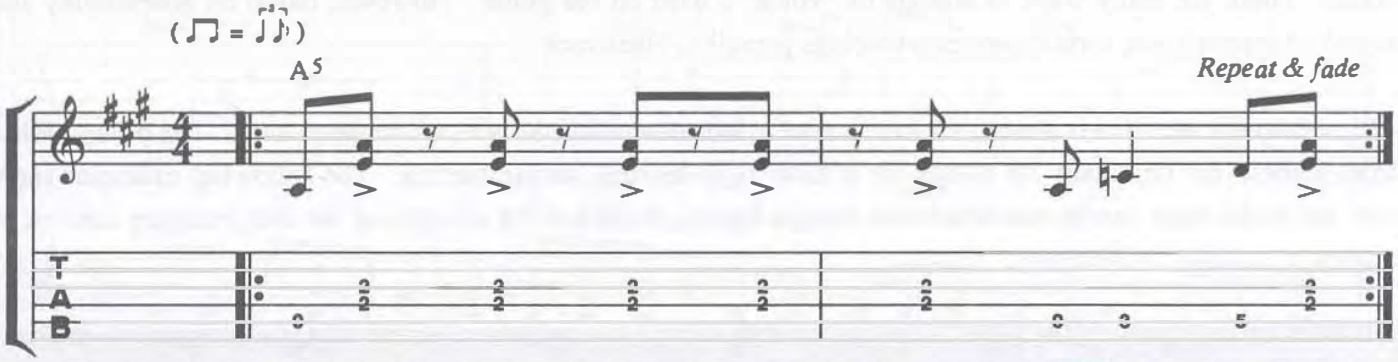
This example, a la Joe Walsh, is obviously inspired by older blues tunes like "I'm a Man" by Muddy Waters, where the heart of the tune is a repetitive lick with a slow, creeping shuffle feel played between lyric phrases of some compelling story. The opening four bars in this example bring that situation to mind with the use of E5 (I) and A5 (IV) open position fingerings in the key of E.

The boogie figure brings momentum to the changes from IV(A5 and A6) to I (E5 and E6) in the following bars, ending the phrase with great stress on the V (B5) power chord in bars 11 and 12. The example ends with a chord movement of D major to E5 with an E pedal below. This superimposition of a triad, built on the ♭7 chord is decidedly owned more by rock than blues. Note the inclusion of the boogie pattern on the E5 and E6 chords in the 7th position—clearly bringing blues and rock together in these final bars.



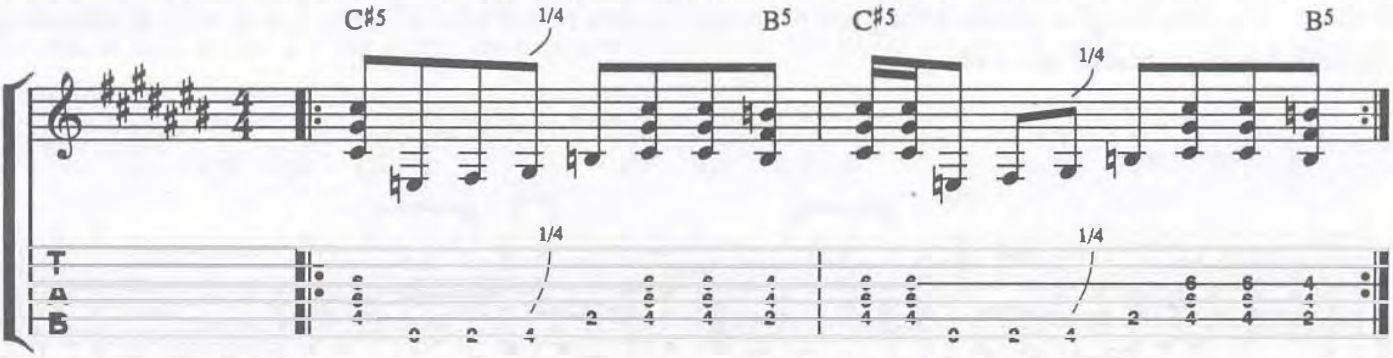
Example 6

This is a rocked up "Texas Shuffle" in the style of ZZ Top. A Texas Shuffle puts great emphasis on the upbeats in a shuffle groove, denoted here by the accents on the A5 power chords. The C and D notes imply the presence of C (♭III) and D (IV) major chords—commonly found in blues/rock progressions.



Example 7

This Jimi Hendrix rhythm part lays heavily on the power 5th chords of I (C♯5) and ♭VII (B5) in the key of C♯. The single notes are found in the C♯ pentatonic minor scale (C♯ E F♯ G♯ B), used here to connect C♯5 and B5.



Major Triads, Dominant 7th and Dominant 9th Chords

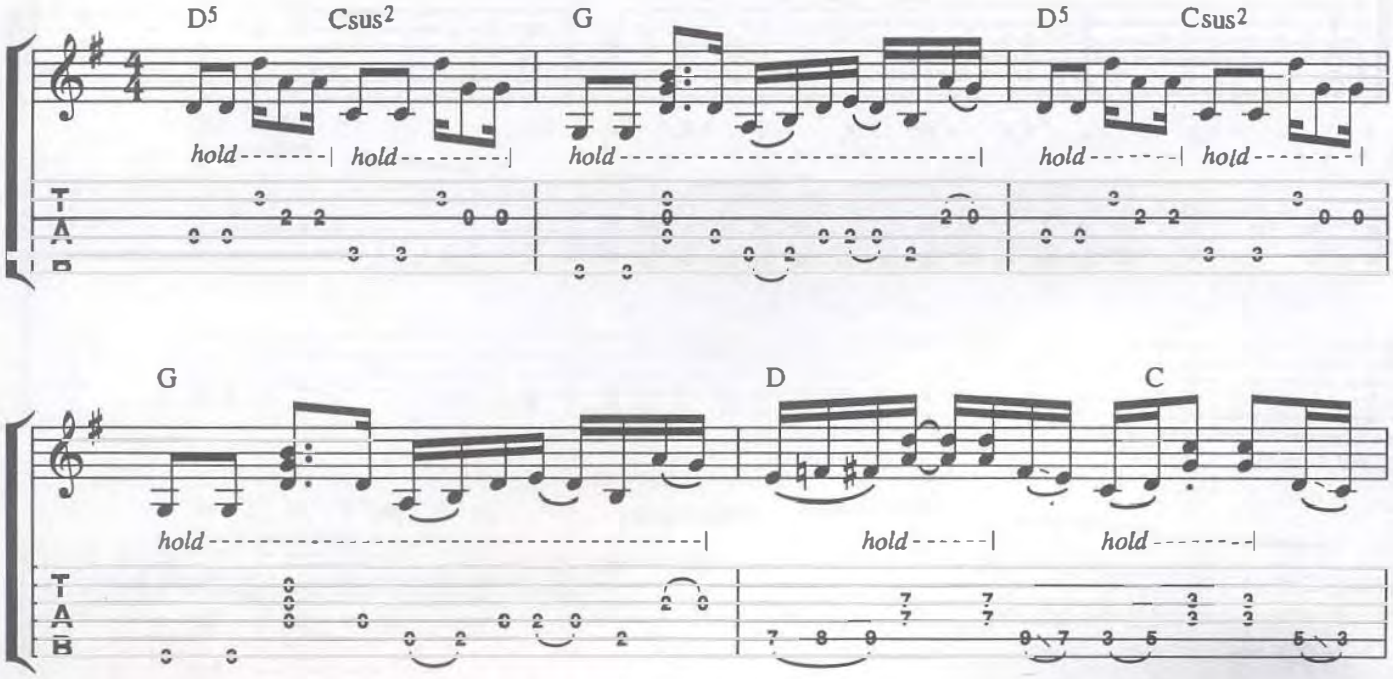
Major Triads

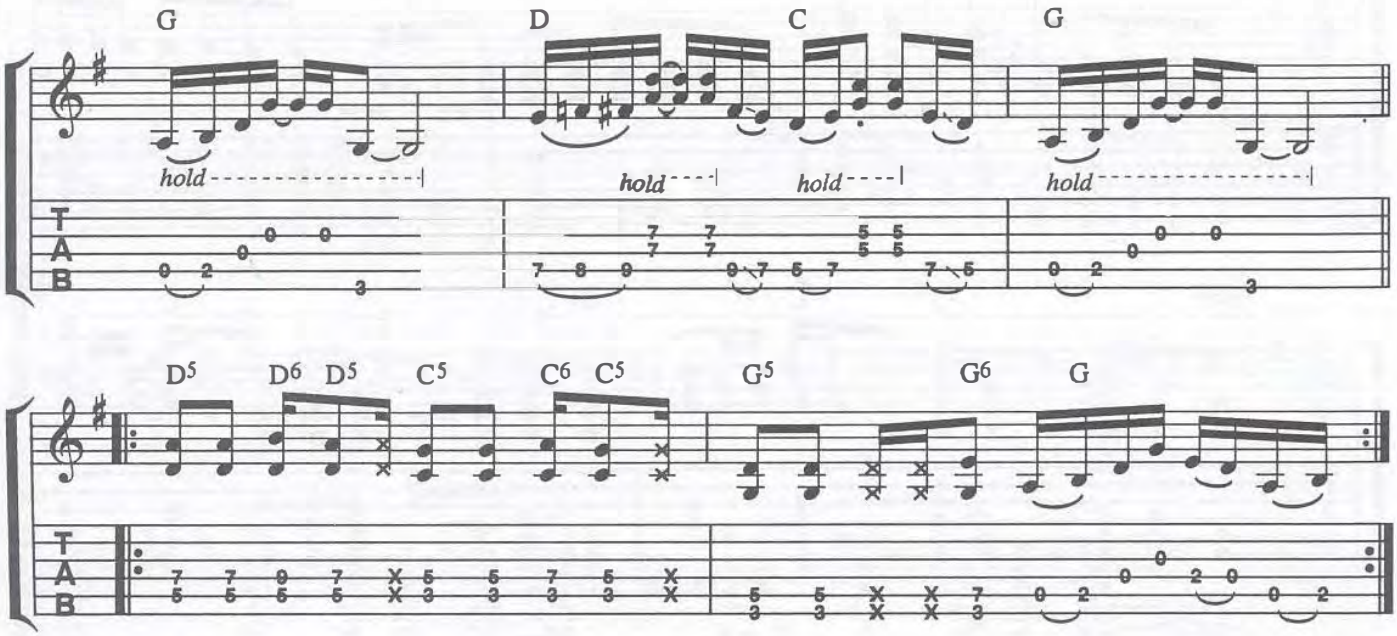
A major triad consists of the root, 3rd and 5th scale degrees of a major key played simultaneously to form a chord. There are many ways to arrange or "voice" a triad on the guitar. However, based on accessibility and sound characteristics, certain common voicings prevail in blues/rock.

The occurrence of triads in blues/rock has its root in the country-blues styles of the deep south. The purity of the triad without the dominant 7th makes for a more light-hearted, simple feeling. The following examples show how the major triad can be combined with boogie figures, dominant 7th chords and the like, bringing contrast of moods.

Example 8

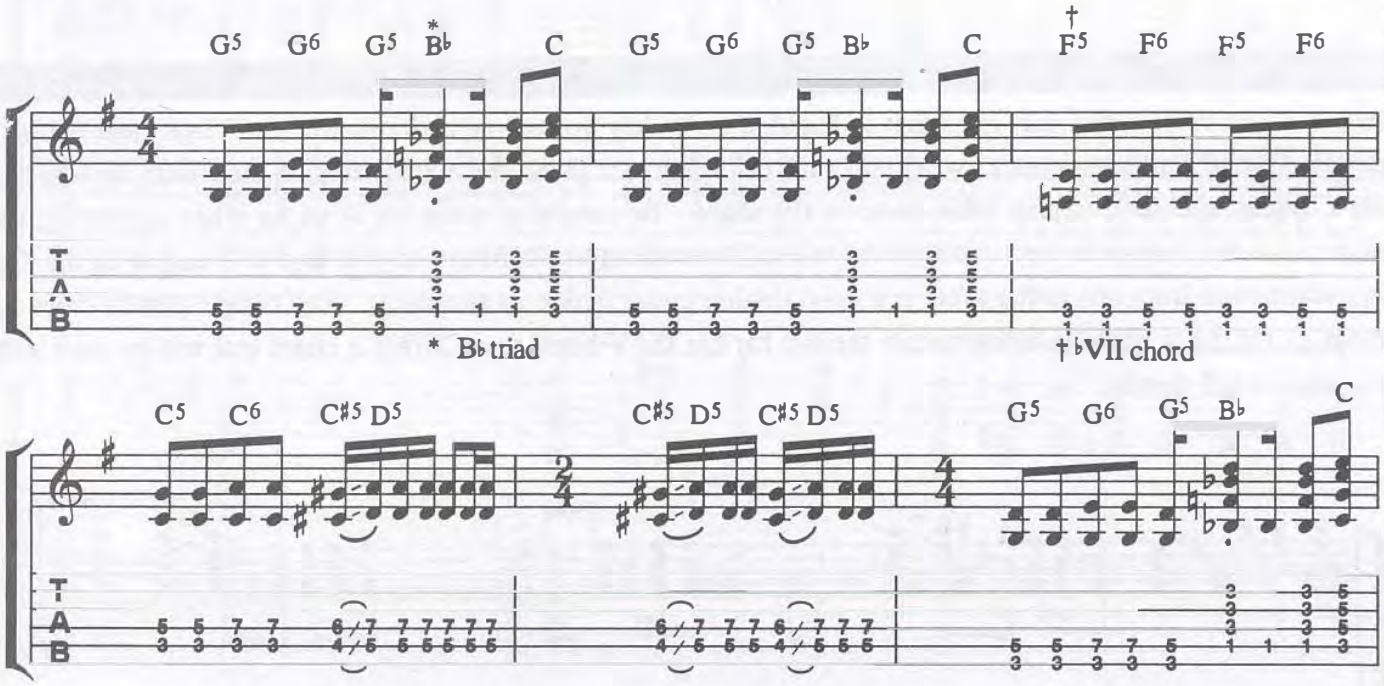
From a famous Lynyrd Skynyrd song we have this guitar part which embodies three versions of the chord progression V-IV-I (D-C-G) in the key of G. The first four-bar phrase is played with open position chords making use of open strings. Csus2 is a common substitute for C in rock. The sixteenth note lick is derived from the G pentatonic major scale (G A B D E), complimenting the simple major chord character of the song. The next four-bar phrase moves the V and IV chords up the neck, making use of the 1st inversion voicing of D and C. (The 1st inversion of D has the 3rd (F♯) of the chord in the bass at the 9th fret, while the 1st inversion of C has its 3rd (E) in the bass at the 7th fret.) The I chord is represented by an open string lick that when held, forms an open G chord. The final four-bar phrase is the good old boogie pattern played over all three chords, with an interesting rhythmic figure on beats 2 and 4 of bar 1.

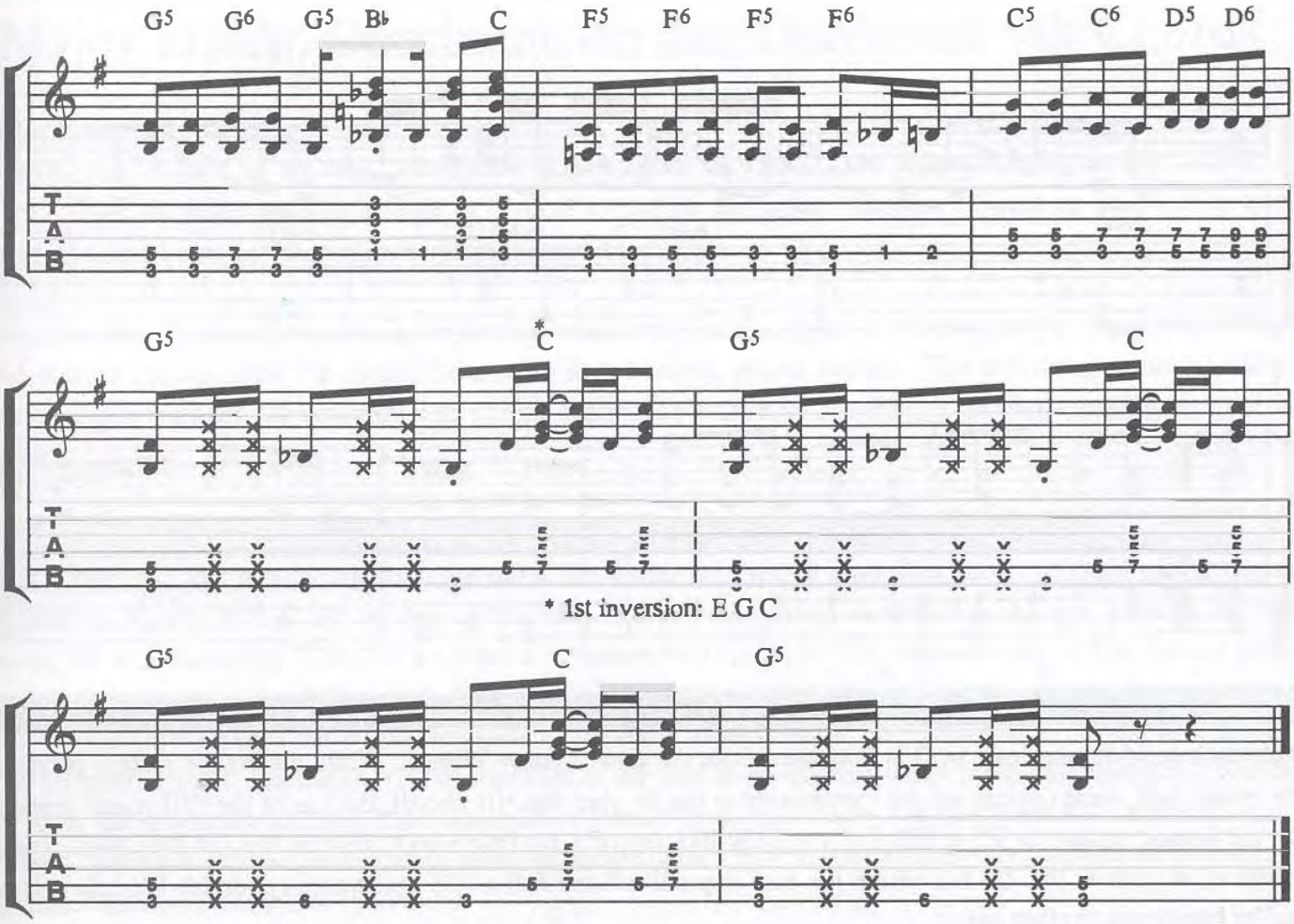




Example 9

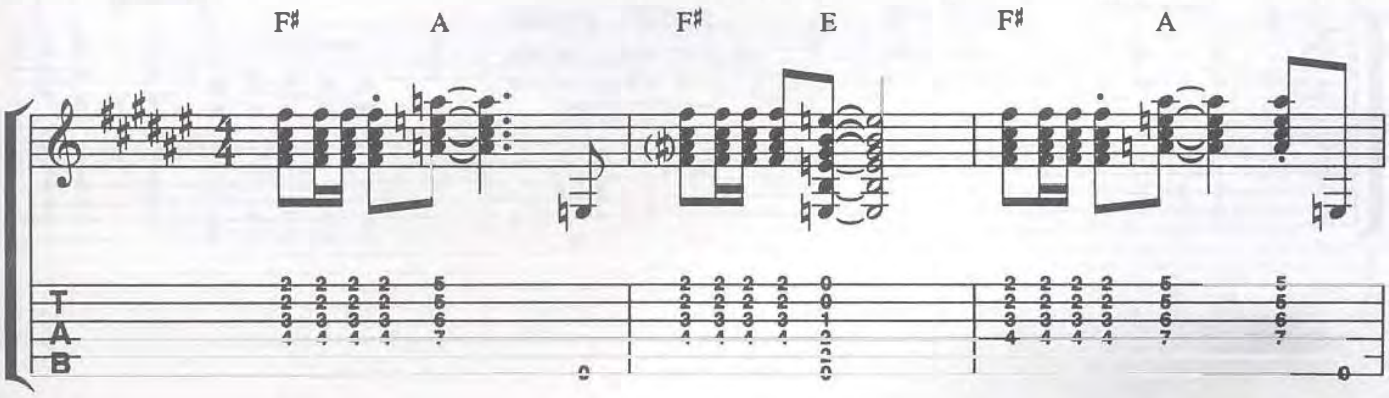
This rock-solid rhythm part in G is borrowed from the great Johnny Winter. While the boogie pattern pervades the entire part, most critical are the movements to the B♭ triad (the ♭III chord), the use of the ♭VII chord (marked by the boogie pattern of F5 to F6) and the hook-like use of a 1st inversion C triad in the last four bars. These features, as well as the 2/4 bar where the half-step slides from C♯5 to D5 are found, epitomize this example as stellar blues/rock rhythm guitar.

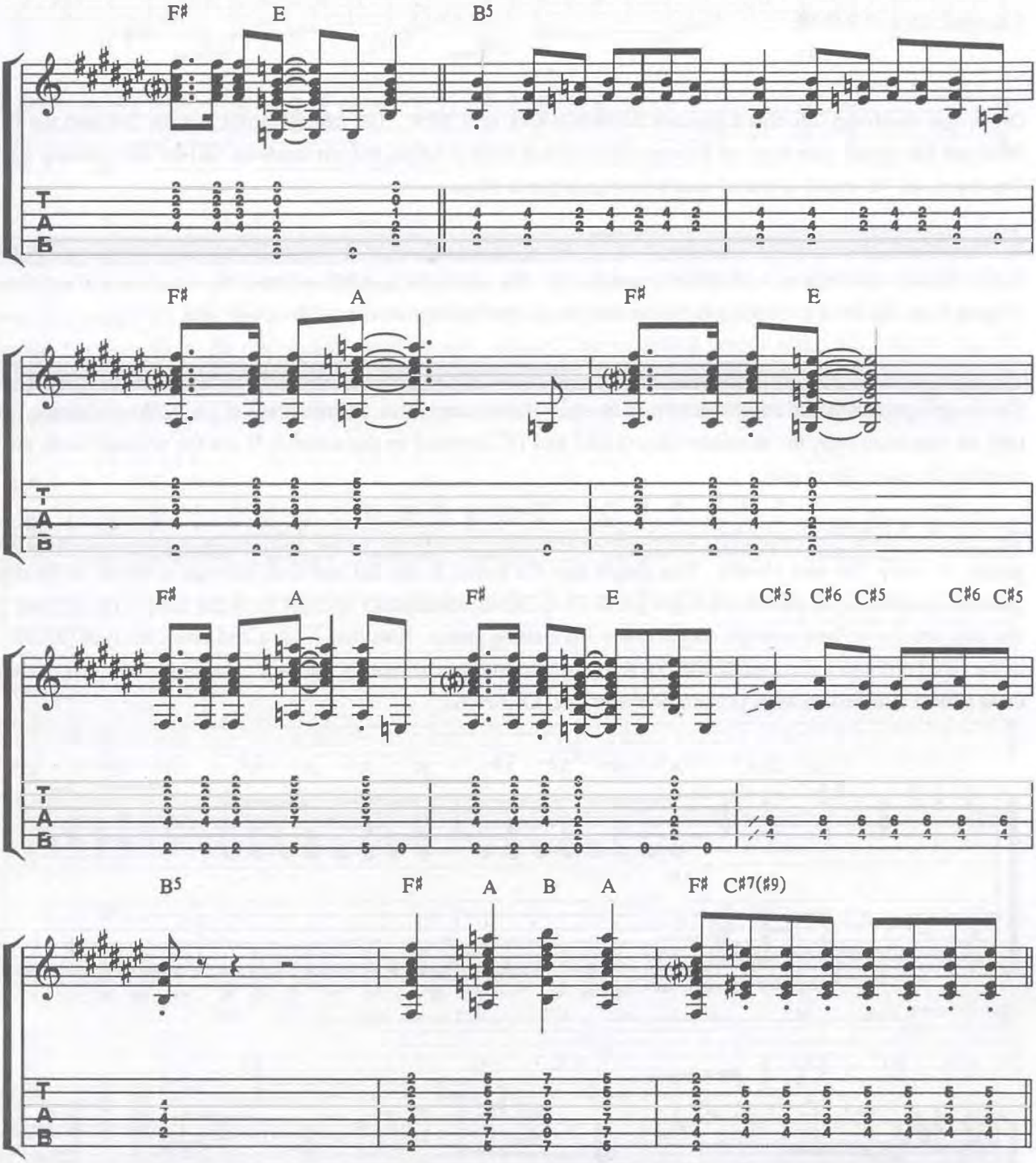




Example 10

This is a groovy Hendrix part in F♯ that is founded on widely voiced major triads for the ♭III (A) and ♭VII (E) chords. One of Jimi's trademarks was to play the 6th string root of the five-note triad with his thumb, leaving his other fingers available to play other notes in the shape. Be careful to mute the A string when employing the thumb. On the change to the IV(B5) chord in bar 5, check out the auxiliary double stop at E and A on the 2nd fret: alternating from one to the other is a good rhythm guitar device to remember. The boogie pattern crops up in bar 11 for the V chord (C♯5/C♯6) while the last bar has the V heard as a C♯7(♯9), a chord that will be dealt with in greater detail shortly.




F♯ E B5
F♯ A F♯ E
F♯ A F♯ E C♯5 C♯6 C♯5 C♯6 C♯5
B5 F♯ A B A F♯ C♯7(♯9)
T
A
B

Dominant 7th Chords

The dominant 7th (or "7") chord is a major triad that includes the ♭7th (a minor 7th from the root).

Example: C7 = C E G B♭.
1 3 5 ♭7

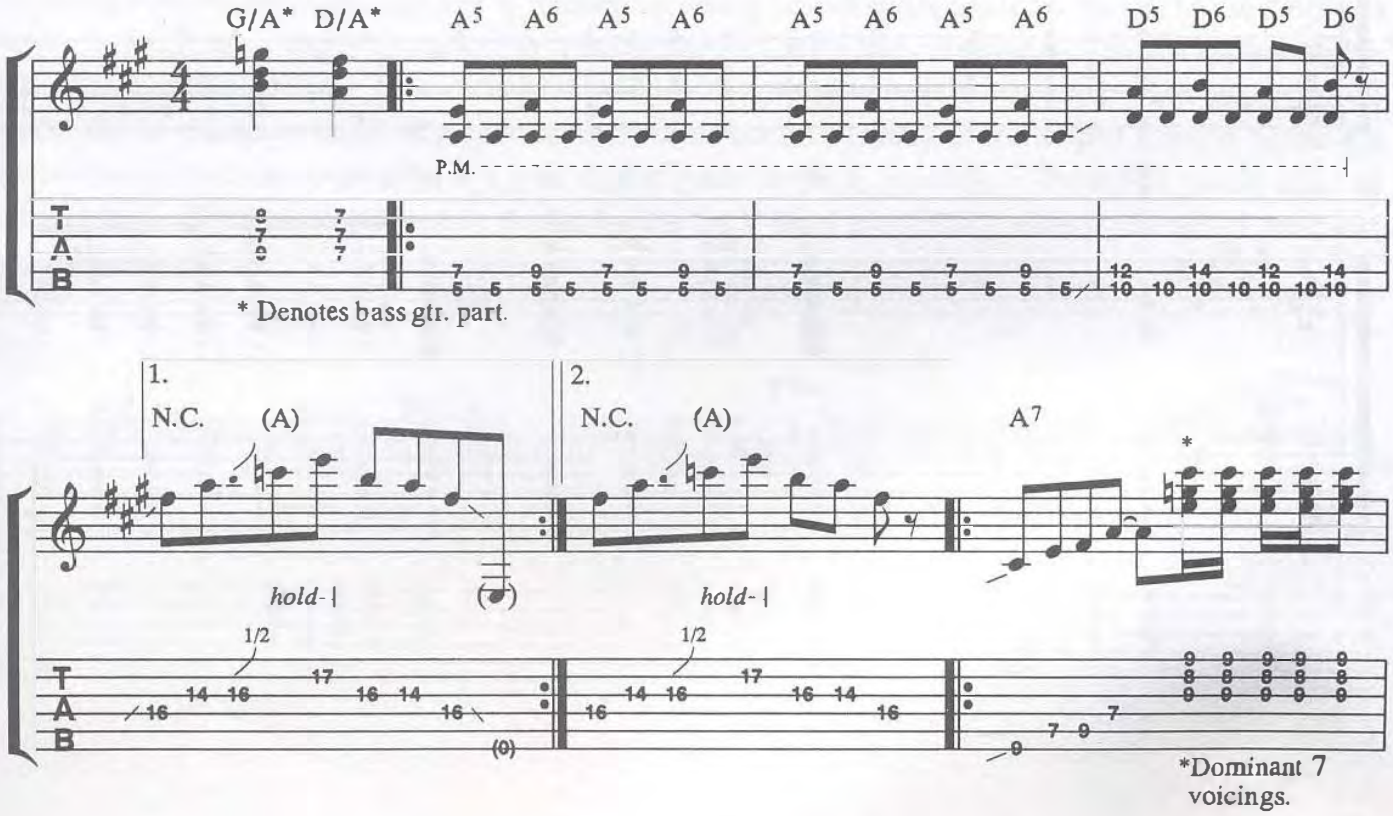
Often, the dominant 7th chord appears without a root or a fifth. The crucial notes are the 3rd and the ♭7th. Provided the tritone (the interval between the 3rd and ♭7th) is heard, the ear tends to "fill in" the missing notes. The dominant 7th chord is one of rock's strongest ties to blues.

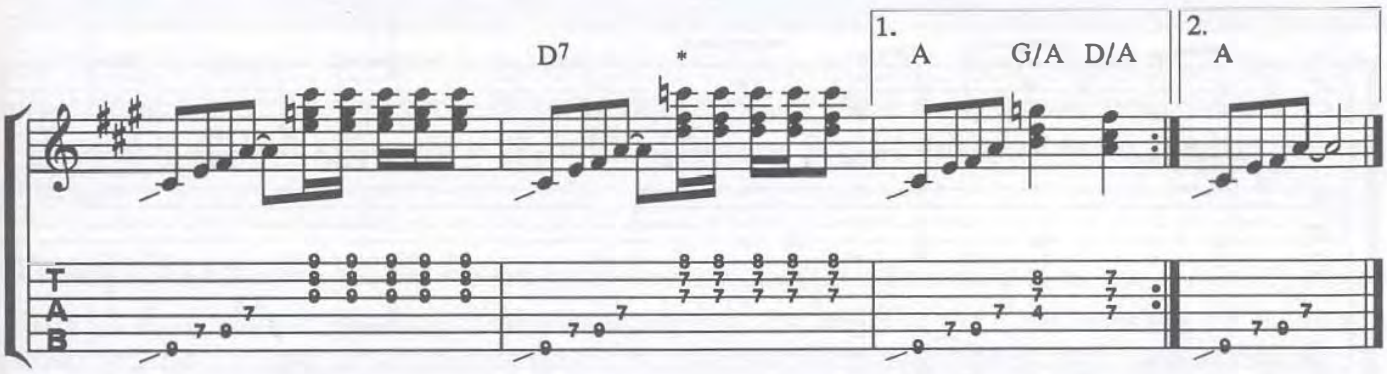
In blues, the I, IV and V chords are usually dominant types or implied to be such and therefore when heard in rock contexts, one tends to recall blues immediately. The examples that follow establish varied uses of the chord, ranging from full blown voicings to the occurrence of the ♭7th degree without the major 3rd.

Example 11

The boogie pattern is the backbone of this Beatles' rhythm part in A. While triads (G/A, D/A) and single lines play an important role, the dominant chords (A7 and D7, denoted by the asterisk *) are the musical hook, not to mention the most fun to play.

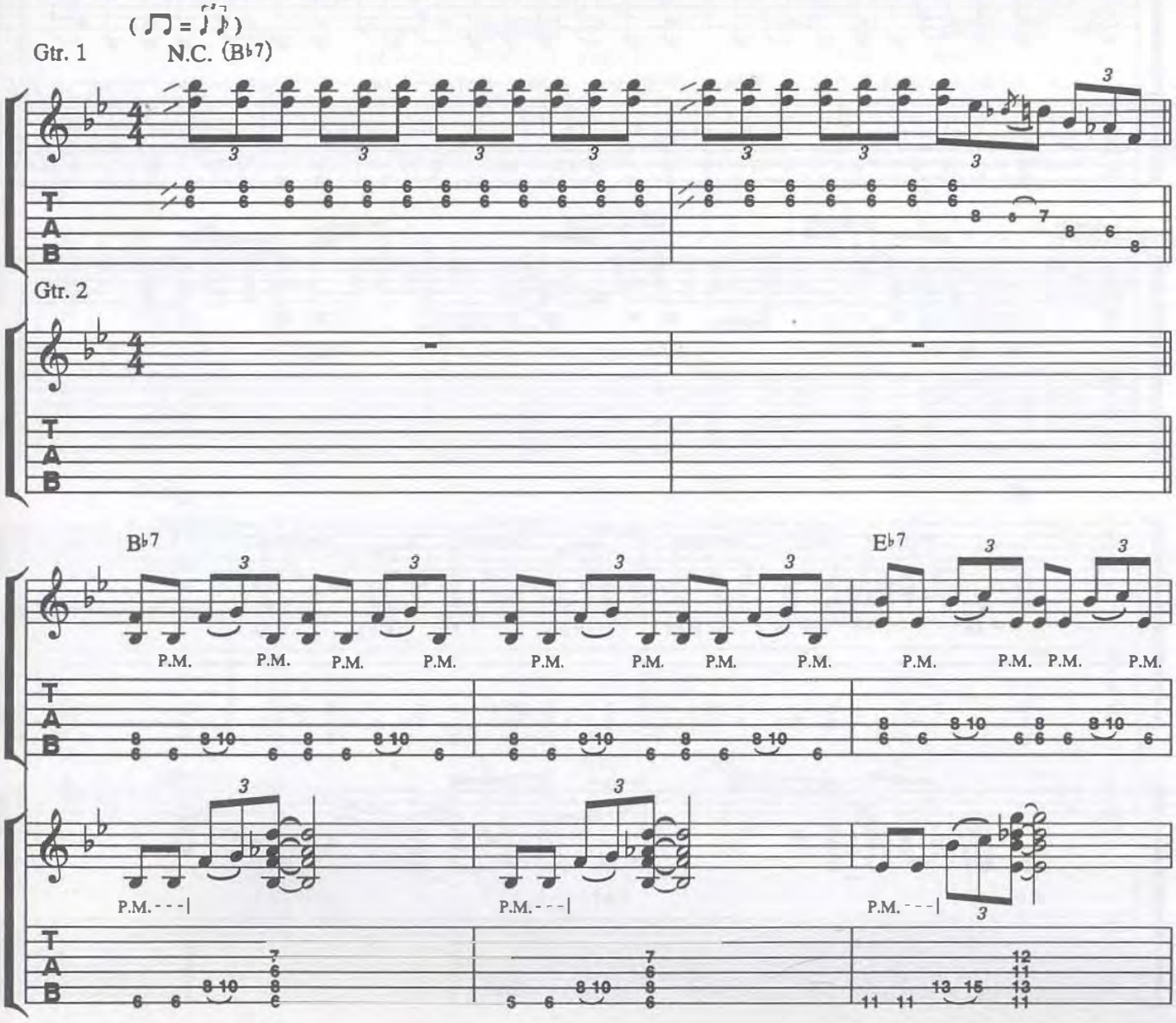
The opening triads (G/A and D/A) are common inversion types found on the 4-3-2 string group. The bass guitar pedals A below the two chords. The single line fill found in the 1st and 2nd endings is based in the most common position of A pentatonic major (A B C♯ E F♯) but substitutes C♮ for C♯ upon the bend. The A7 and D7 voicings are played here as triple-stops on the 3-2-1 string group. Note that A7 is a 2nd inversion type (the 5th, E in the bass) without a root, while the D7 is a root position type without a 5th (A). The single line that precedes these chords is based on an A pentatonic major lick, C♯ E F♯ A.

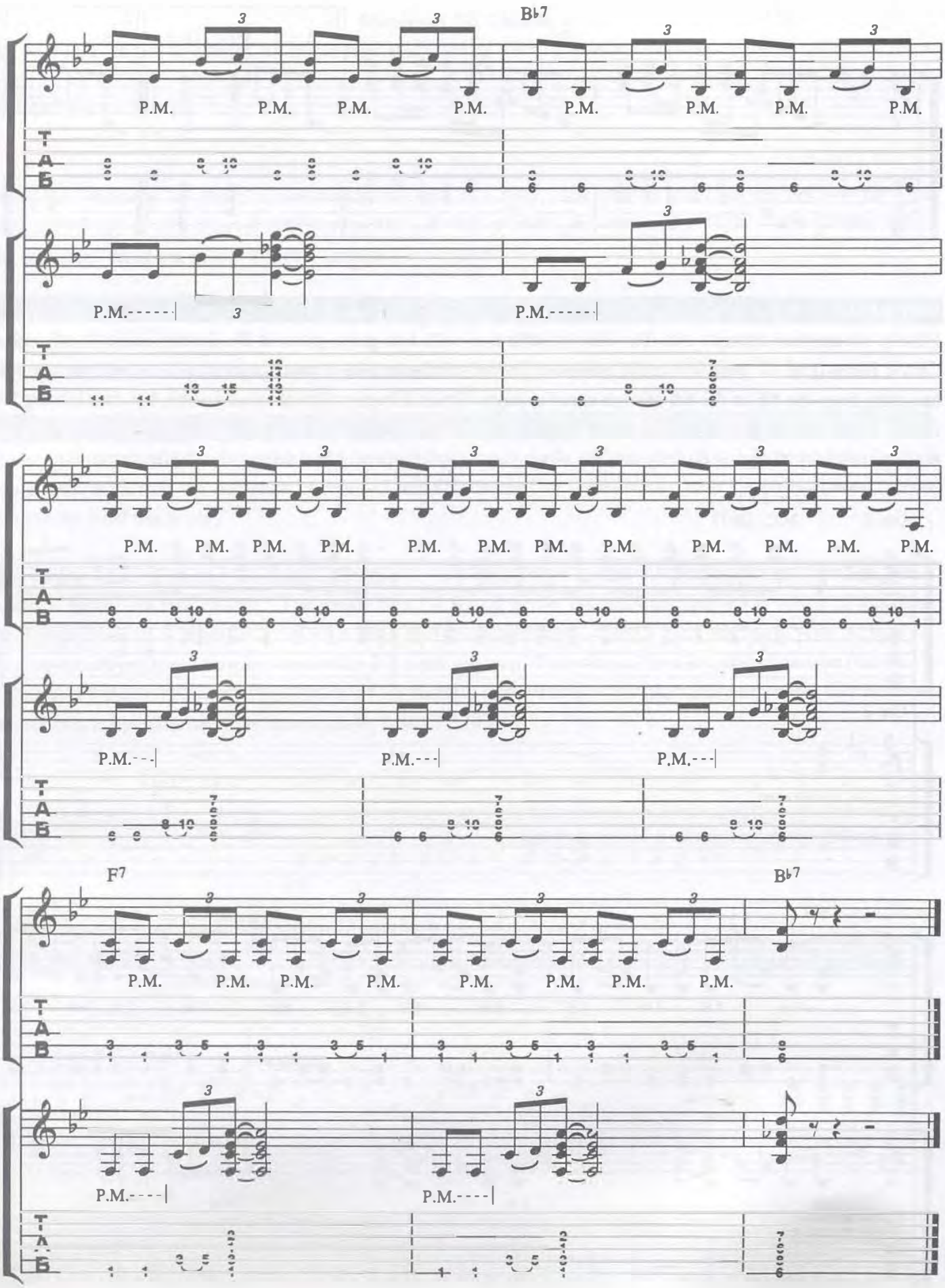




Example 12

Here is yet another example a la The Beatles, this time with two guitar parts in B♭. Guitar 1 kicks it off with a Chuck Berry-type fill over B♭7 in 6th position. It then continues with a cool variation of a boogie pattern with hammers from the 5th to the 6th of each chord change. Guitar 2 begins almost exactly alike, but then hits big 7th chords for each change. This example attempts to emulate the original with a revolutionary amount of distortion; made possible by plugging directly into the mixing board and purposely overdriving the daylights out of it.

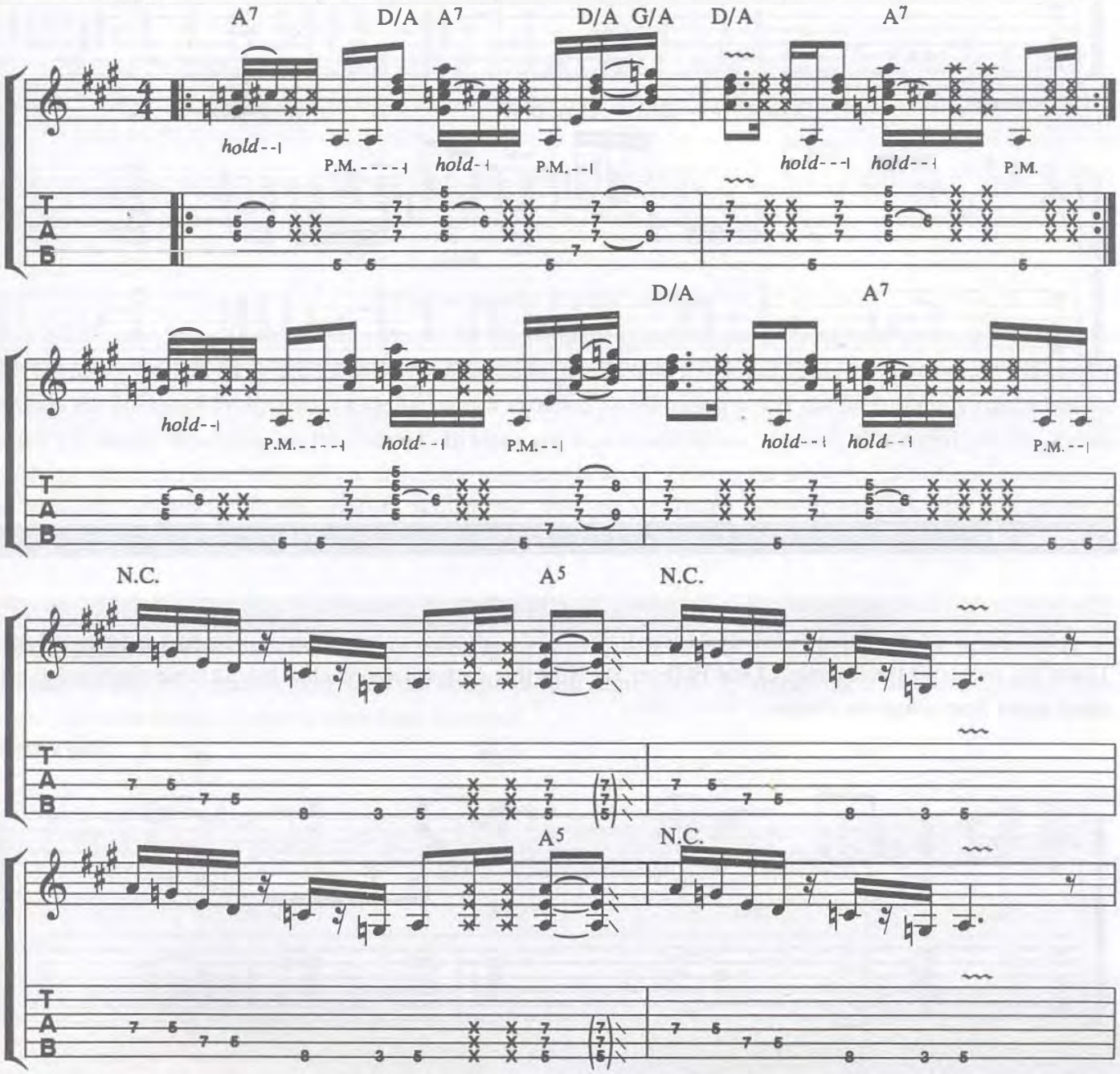



B♭7
P.M.
F7
B♭7

Example 13

This example is chock-full of great blues/rock rhythm stuff, not to mention being a regular riot to play. This part comes to us courtesy of Joe Walsh. Its main signature bits are found in the opening two bars: first is the Am hammered to A7 form and second is the D/A (2nd inversion D triad) hammered to the G/A (1st inversion G triad).

Looking at the A7 chord, you can see that while the minor 3rd (C♮) is hammered to the major 3rd (C♯), any other notes hit along with the C♮ must be held after hammering. On beat 3 of bar 1, the notes (G♮, C♮, E and A) are barred with the 1st finger as you hammer to the C♯, played with the 2nd finger. The same technique applies to the hammer found from D/A to G/A. On beat 1 of bar 2, all three notes of the D/A chord are played with a vibrato. Make sure your fret hand is laid across all six strings when playing the "dead hits" (denoted by the x's). In addition to a brief modulation to B (bar 9), this example also features power 5th chords (A5 and B5) and an E7(♯9) that acts as the V chord, returning us to the original key of A.



B5 N.C. B5

E7(♯9) A7 D/A A7 D/A G/A D/A A7

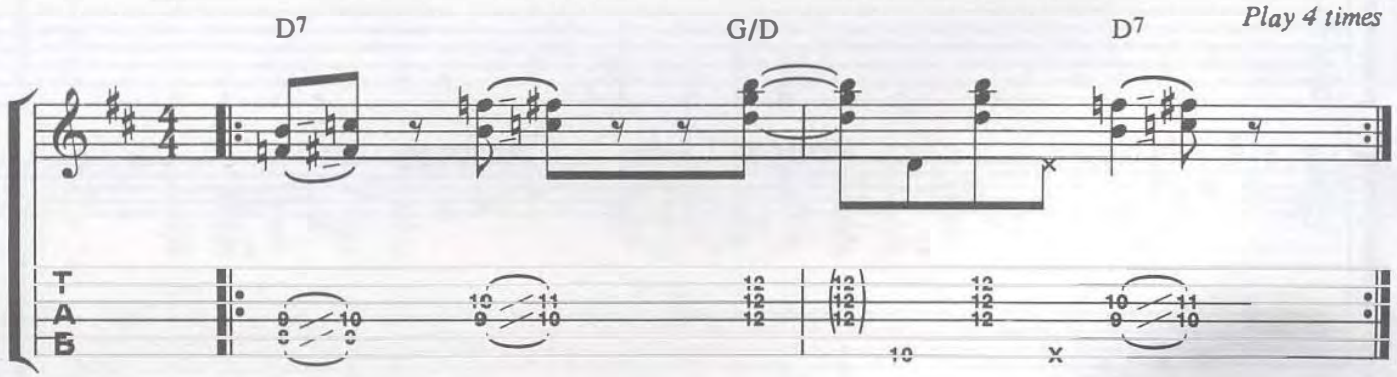
hold-1 hold-1

D/A A7 D/A G/A D/A A7 D/A A7

hold-1 hold--1

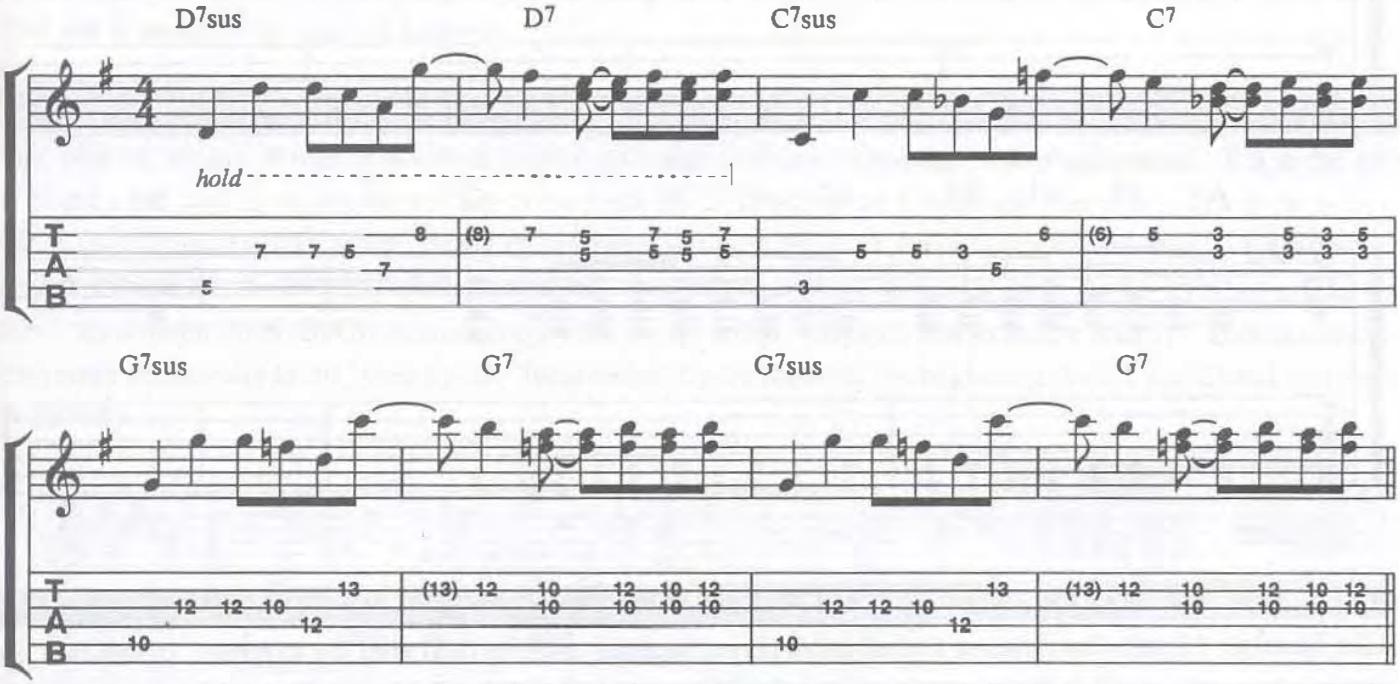
Example 14

This memorable Rolling Stones' riff in D outlines the crucial 3rd and ♭7th of a D7 chord (F♯ and C♮) in two ways. Both combinations are found as tritone double-stops on two different string pairings. The first is F♯ and C♮ (beat 1) and the second is the inverse, C♮ and F♯ (beat 3). Note that each are approached by the same shape using non-chord tones from a half-step below.



Example 15

This Beatles' guitar hook in G has the I, IV and V chords delineated as 7th chord arpeggios with additional notes. Each chord has its 3rd suspended to a 4th (i.e. G7 = B up to C) as well as including its 9th (i.e. G7 has A). This line is such a great hook that Jimi Hendrix couldn't resist working it into his songs in concert.

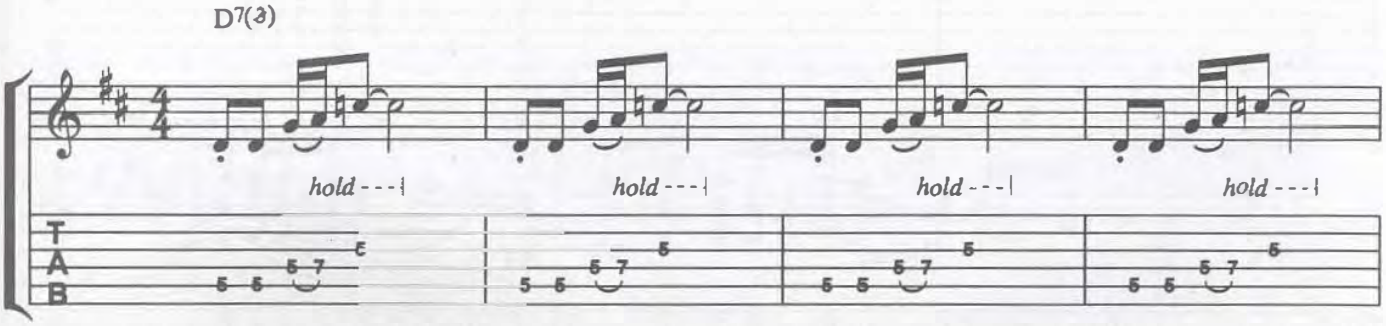


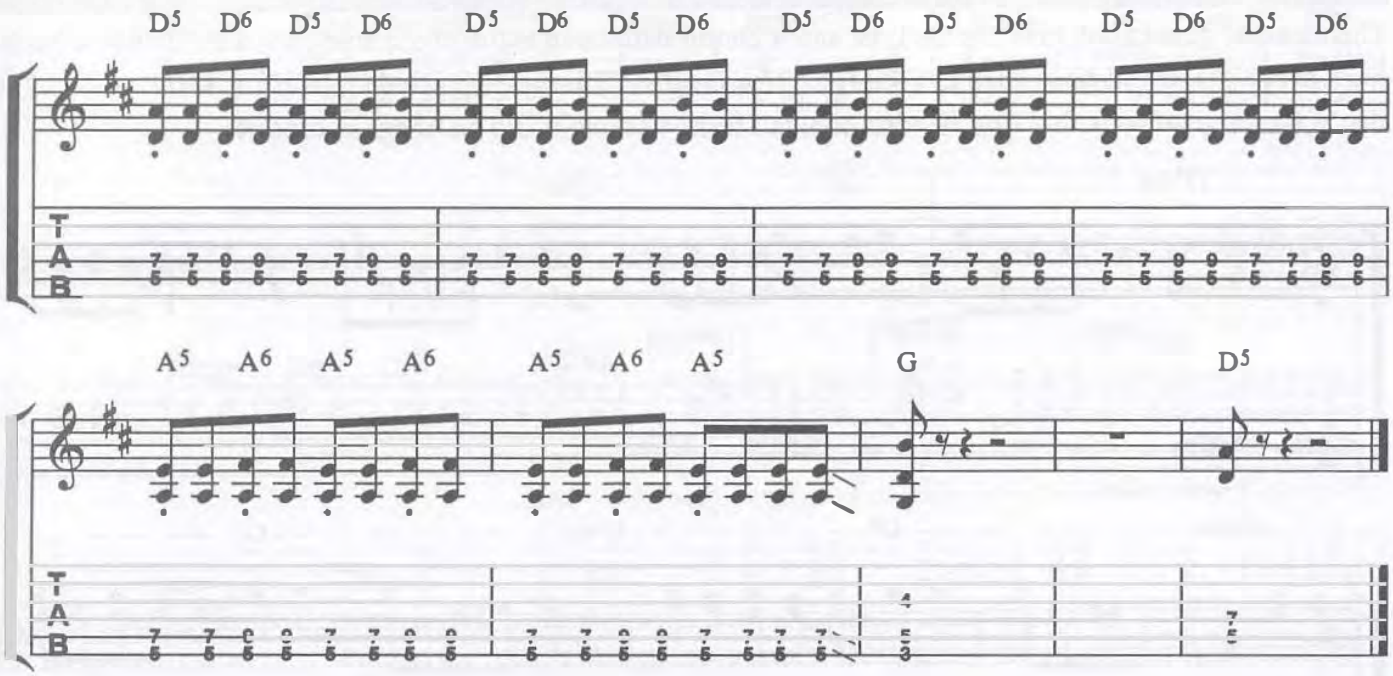
The Dominant 7th No 3rd: 7(∄)

This is a commonly used sound in blues/rock. Its very name is as ambiguous as its musical character. I have said that the major 3rd and the ♭7 are the two crucial notes in determining a dominant chord. How can it be dominant without the 3rd then? Well, it isn't exactly. It can be heard as belonging to the dominant family (major) or the minor 7th family depending on the context. In blues and blues/rock styles, however, this chord usually implies the dominant sound and that is why a major key signature is used. Despite the presence of this equivocal chord, by listening "around it," to the vocalist, soloist, etc., you can determine for your ears whether it is closer to dominant or minor.

Example 16

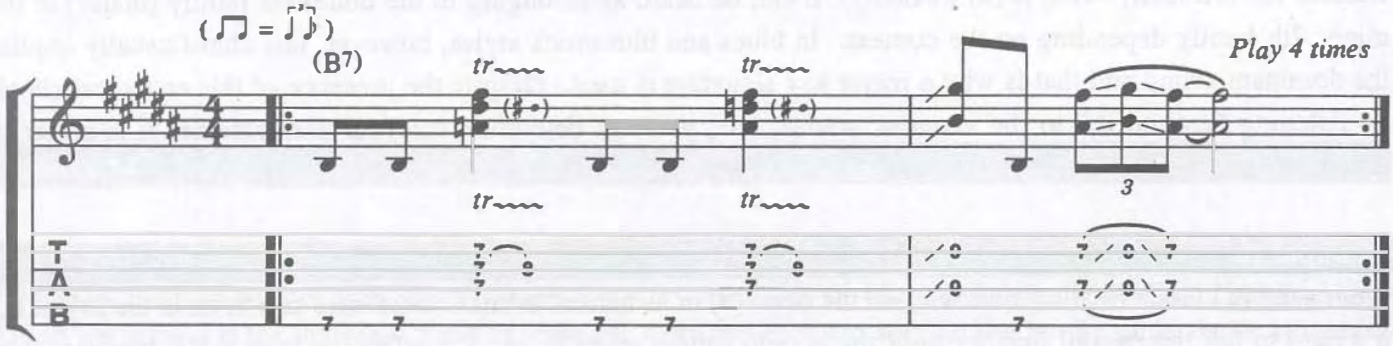
From another classic Beatles' tune we find the dom7(∄) in its natural habitat. Used here as a hook in the key of D, it's hard to tell the overall tonality until the boogie pattern starts in bar 5, confirming it as more dominant than minor, since the boogie pattern is inherently dominant.





Example 17

Like Example 13, this one requires that all notes played together must be held after the hammer. In this case, the hammer becomes a trill (a series of hammers and pulls), making it a little trickier to allow all notes of the chord to ring. With your 1st finger, find the barre position that will enable the A and F♯ to ring while you trill to the D♯ with your 2nd (or 3rd) finger. The low B notes are best played with the thumb. This is a real useful device for all kinds of tunes at any tempo. Robin Trower is credited with this baby.

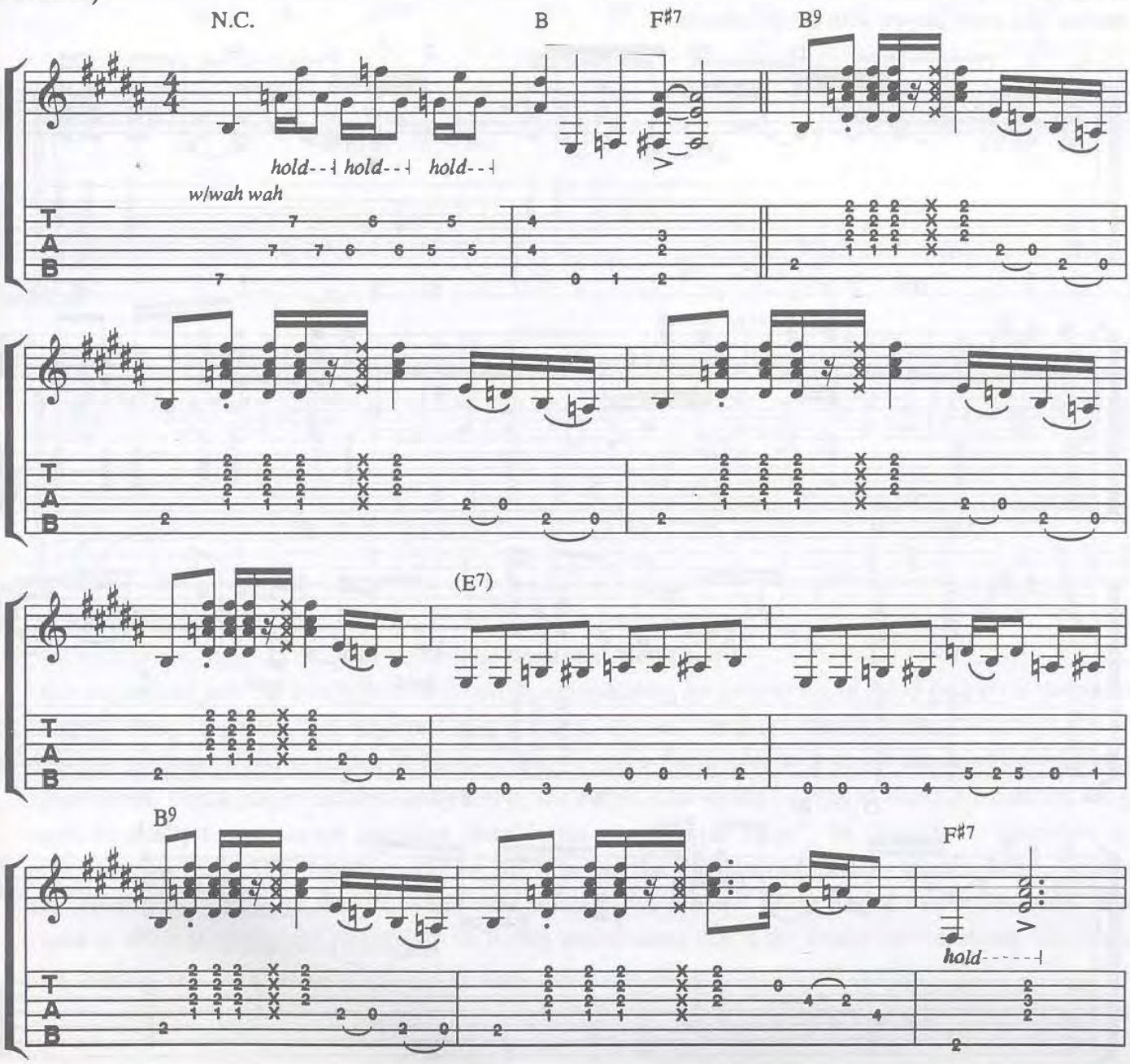


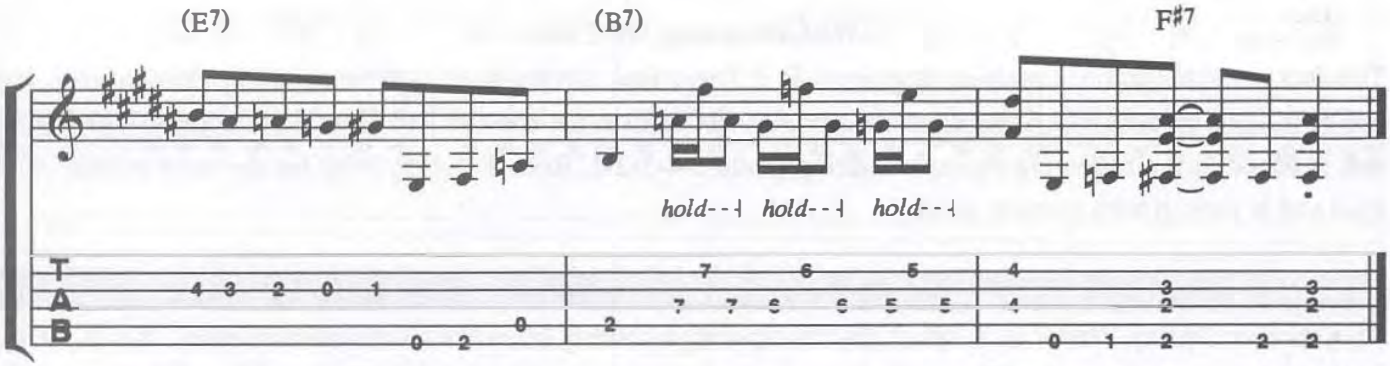
The Dominant 9th Chord

This is a sound that immediately evokes blues, R & B and funk styles. It tends to bring another level to rock, and has been used by everyone from Zeppelin and Hendrix to Extreme and the Red Hot Chili Peppers. The voicing that is found in the following examples (string group 5-4-3-2-1, Root-3-♭7-9-5) is by far the most popular of its kind and is packed with musical history.

Example 18

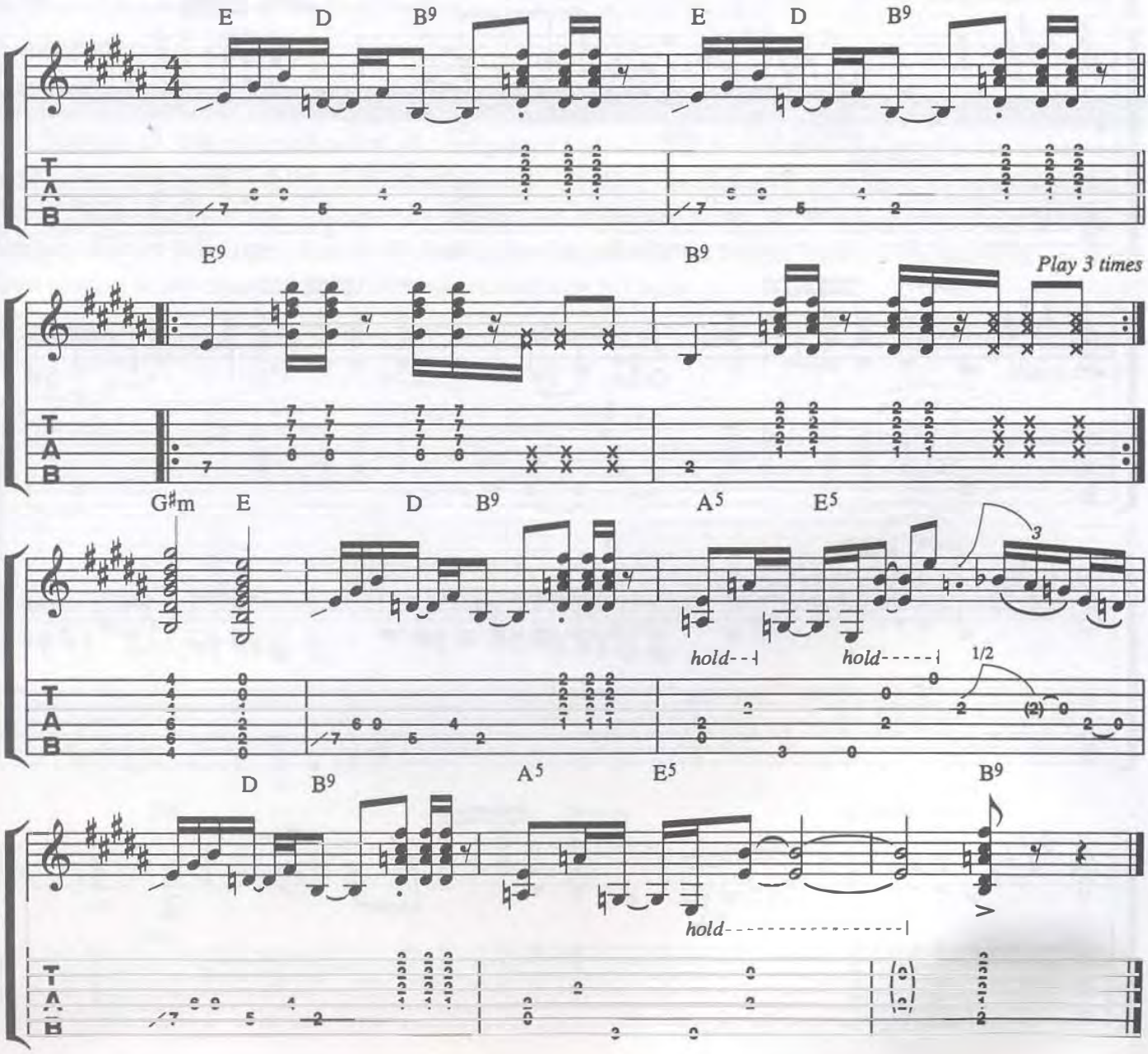
This slice of Johnny Winter is a sort of psycho-up-tempo-country-blues/rock-funk-phenomenon. It's in the key of B and leans heavily on the B9 voicing in 1st position. Supporting the I chord (B9) are some slick B pentatonic minor (B D E F♯ A) licks articulated with hammers and pulls to open strings. Check out how although never played as a chord, the IV (E7) is alluded to with two different single line licks (bars 7 and 12) that accent the minor third/major third (G♮/G♯) relationship within the E7 chord. More on this to follow shortly. This example is connected umbilically to the blues by the "turnaround" figure found in the beginning (bars 1 and 2) and end (bars 11 and 12).





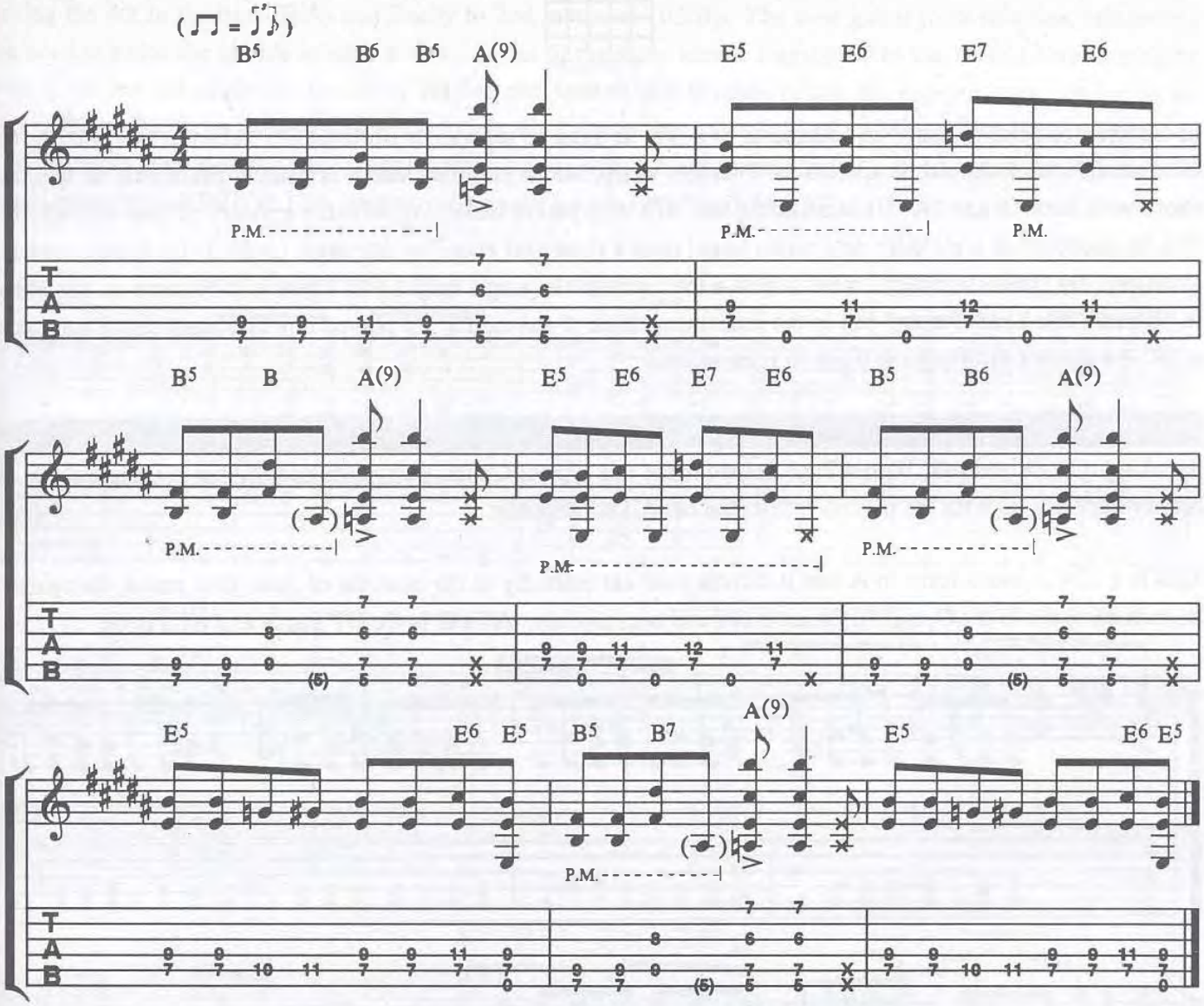
Example 19

If ever there was a true crossover artist, it was Stevie Ray Vaughan, known for blues as well as for rock. This rhythm part (in the key of B) stands as solid evidence of his crossover tendencies. It brings with it a unique chord progression possessing strong blues influence: alternating I (B9) to IV (E9) chords; and a great open string lick using open E pentatonic minor (E G A B D) in bar 7. It is also drawn from a funky side of R & B, with its horn section-like stabs played with the 9th chords.



Example 20

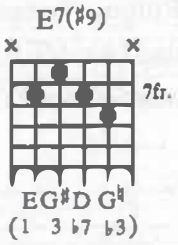
Our last dominant 9th example in E a la the Rolling Stones actually loses the ♭7th degree. The ♭7th is only implied in the IV (Aadd9) chord, as the intervals 1(A), 5(E), 3(C♯) and 9(B) are spread widely apart, forming a unique and useful chord voicing. The boogie pattern pervades the entire example. Employ subtle palm muting.



The Dominant 7(♯9) Chord

More ambiguous than the dom7(3) is the dom7(♯9) and similarly, the general use of the ♭3 (aka ♯9) in dominant chord oriented situations. The dominant 7(♯9) is a tense and dead-serious sounding chord. Although it is of the dominant persuasion and is technically derived from a major triad, it tends to sound meaner than your average minor chord. Guitar players affectionately call it "the Purple Haze chord," owing to Hendrix's constant use of it, made especially famous as the signature chord in his song "Purple Haze." Its character is identified by the presence of both the major 3rd and the minor 3rd. The fact that both 3rds are rubbing together is what causes all the commotion. Of course the ♭3rd is the most common "blue note." When played over a dominant 7th type chord its effect is strong and emotional. So it only makes sense that if the soloist can constantly use this note, then it was only a matter of time before it became common to add into the chord voicing.

Check out the "Purple Haze chord": It spells from low to high: E (1), G♯ (3), D (♭7) and G♮ (♭3, aka ♯9). Dominant 7(♯9) voicings frequently delete the 5th (B).

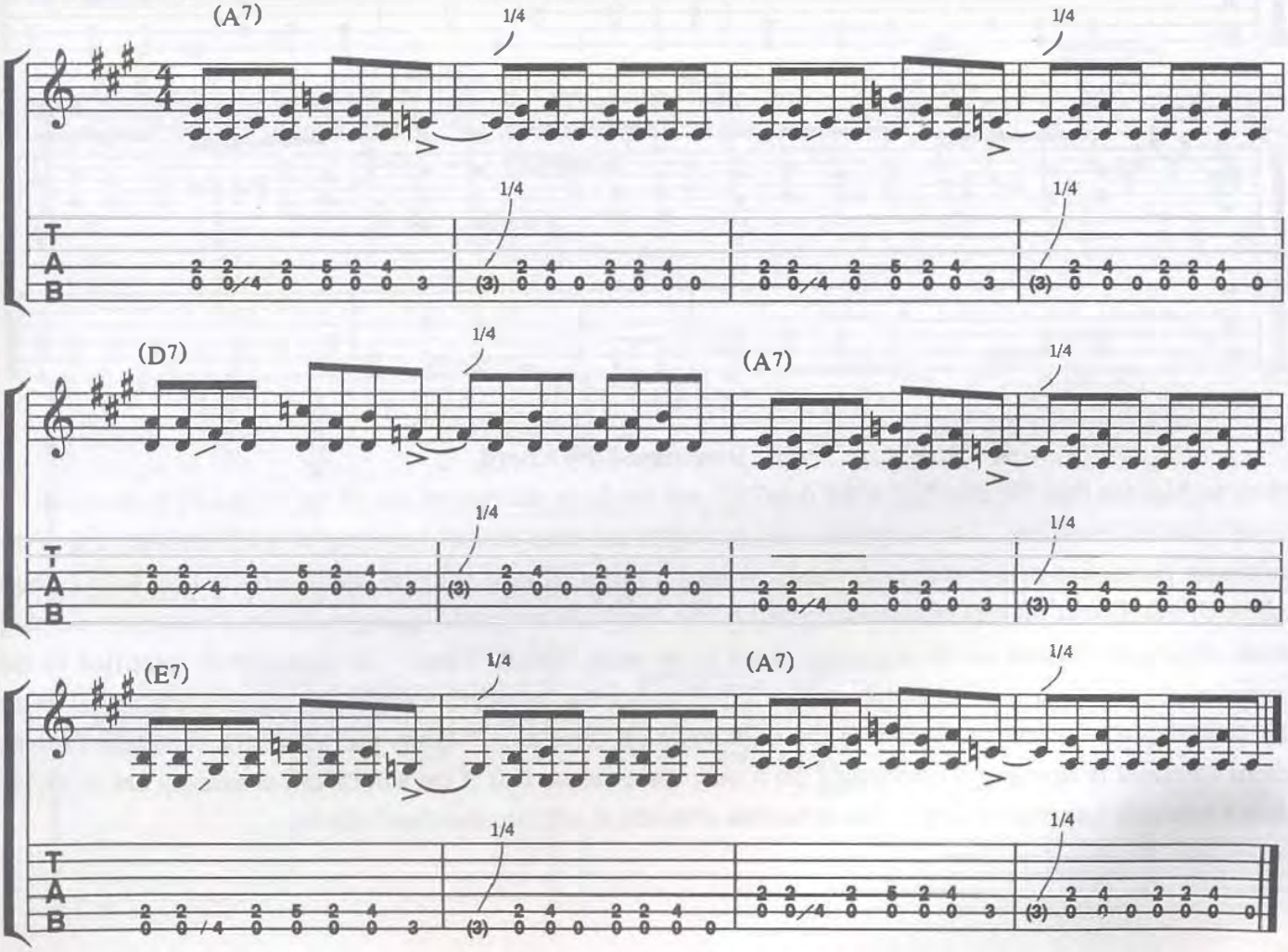


In this type of voicing, the ♭3 is referred to as a "♯9" in order to separate it from the ♮3. Technically speaking, the ♯9 of an E7 chord should be spelled as F double sharp, but in common use it is usually preferable to spell the chord with both G♯ and G♮. Understanding this will help you in reckoning with the mystery of how and why the ♭3 is so accepted as a melodic note when heard over a dominant chord or dominant implied (i.e. boogie pattern) situation. By "melodic note" I mean a note a lead guitarist or singer might hit. There will be more on this ahead in "Blues/Rock Lead Guitar," but in the meantime, think of any minor 3rd played in a dominant chord context as a "♯9"—a kind of gift from the blues to rock and roll.

Example 21

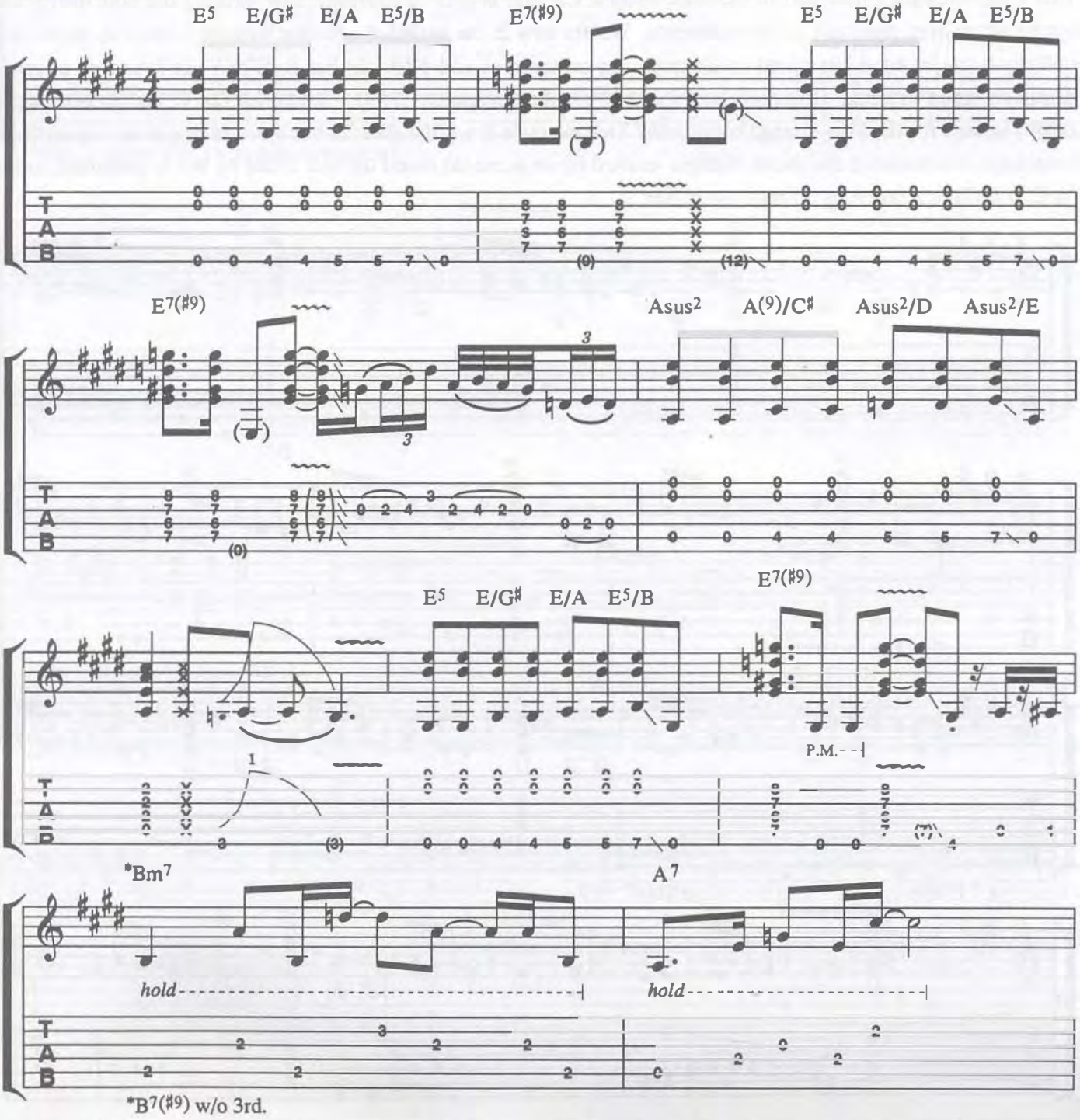
Speaking of rock and roll, Jimmy Page helped make this type of Chuck Berry-inspired rhythm playing a staple of blues/rock early on with his *slightly* influential band, Led Zeppelin.

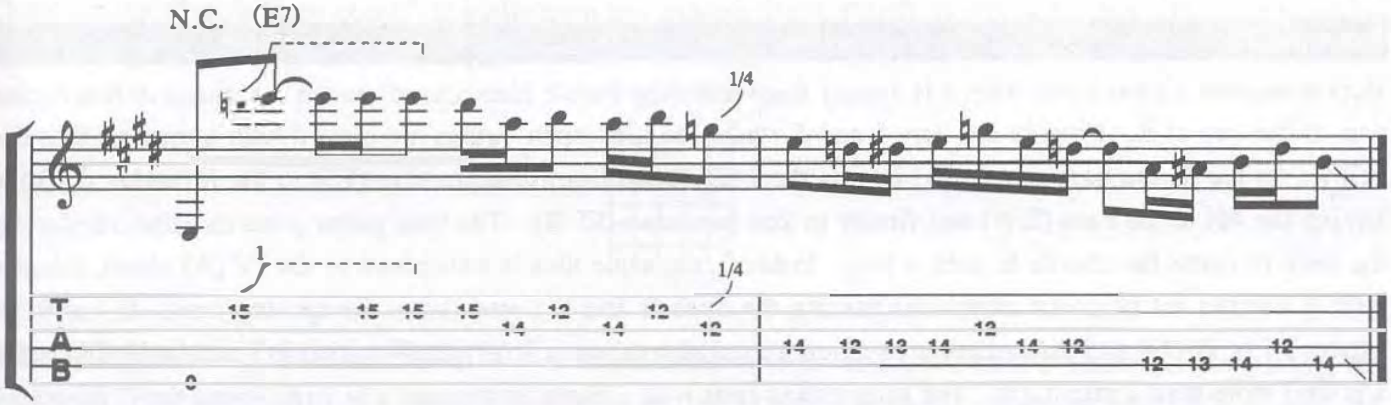
This is a 12-bar blues form in A and it directs your ear instantly to the contrast of 3rds: first major, then minor. In each case, the ♭3 (or ♯9, right?!) is accented and bent slightly. A7's ♯9 is C♮, D7's is F♮ and E7's is G♮.



Example 22

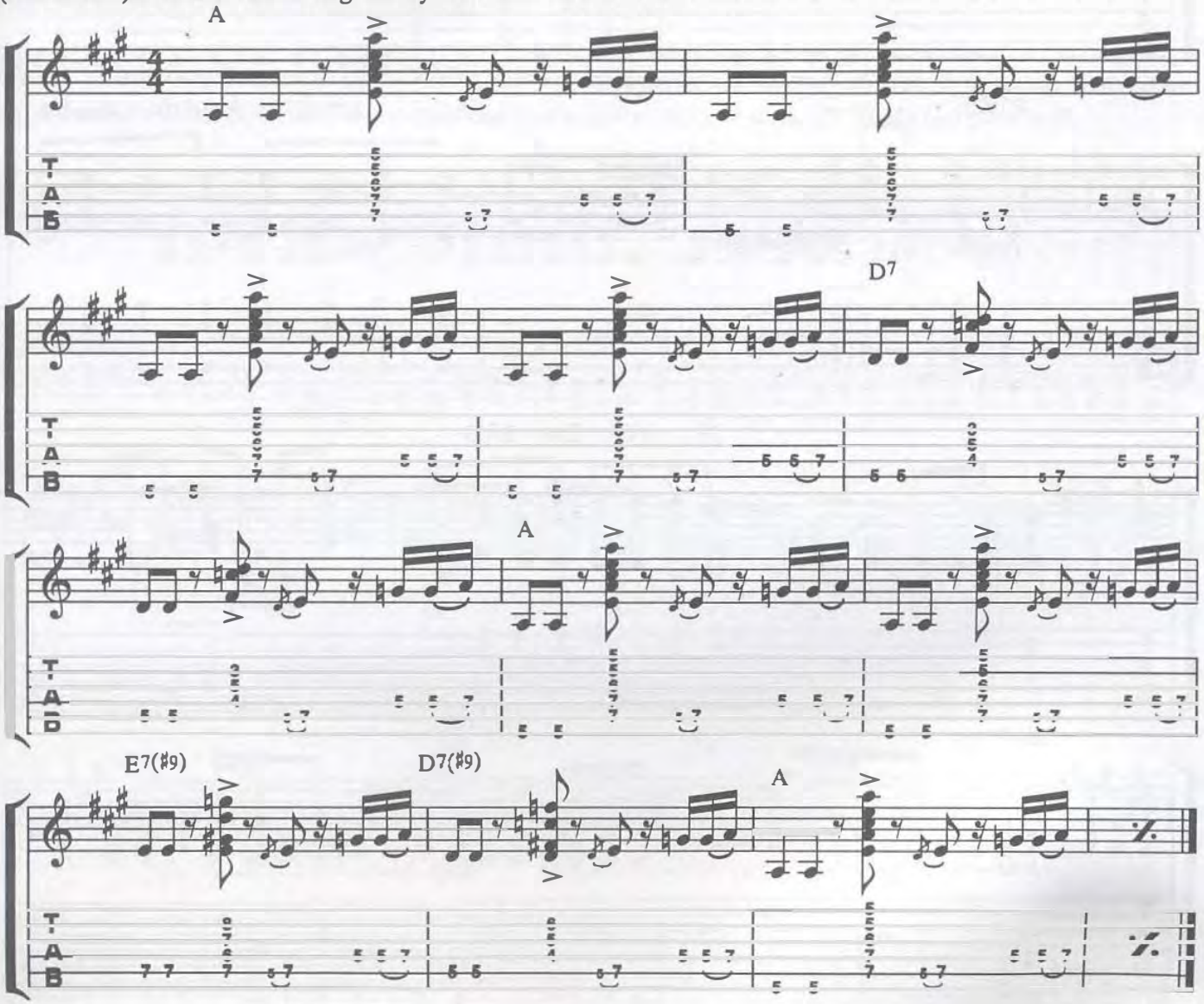
Here is another 12-bar blues form a la Jimmy Page with "the Purple Haze chord" as the spearhead of this rhythm part in the key of E. Notable are bars 1 and 5 where the high open strings are played with a moving bass line below. In bar 1, the bass movement inverts the I (E) chord from root position (E5) to 1st inversion (E/G♯) to having the 4th in the bass (E/A) and finally to 2nd inversion (E5/B). The bass guitar joins this line, reinforcing the need to name the chords in such a way. In bar 5, the same idea is transposed to the IV (A) chord, bringing with it another set of chord inversions placing the open B and E notes above the moving bass. In bar 9, we expect B7 or B7(♯9) and instead get a commonly used alternative: a Vm7 (Bm7) which is functionally likened to a B7(♯9) more than a minor 7th. The progression ends with a blues turnaround a la Page, using the E pentatonic minor scale (E G A B D) in 12th position with passing tones D♯(♯7) and A♯ (C♮7).





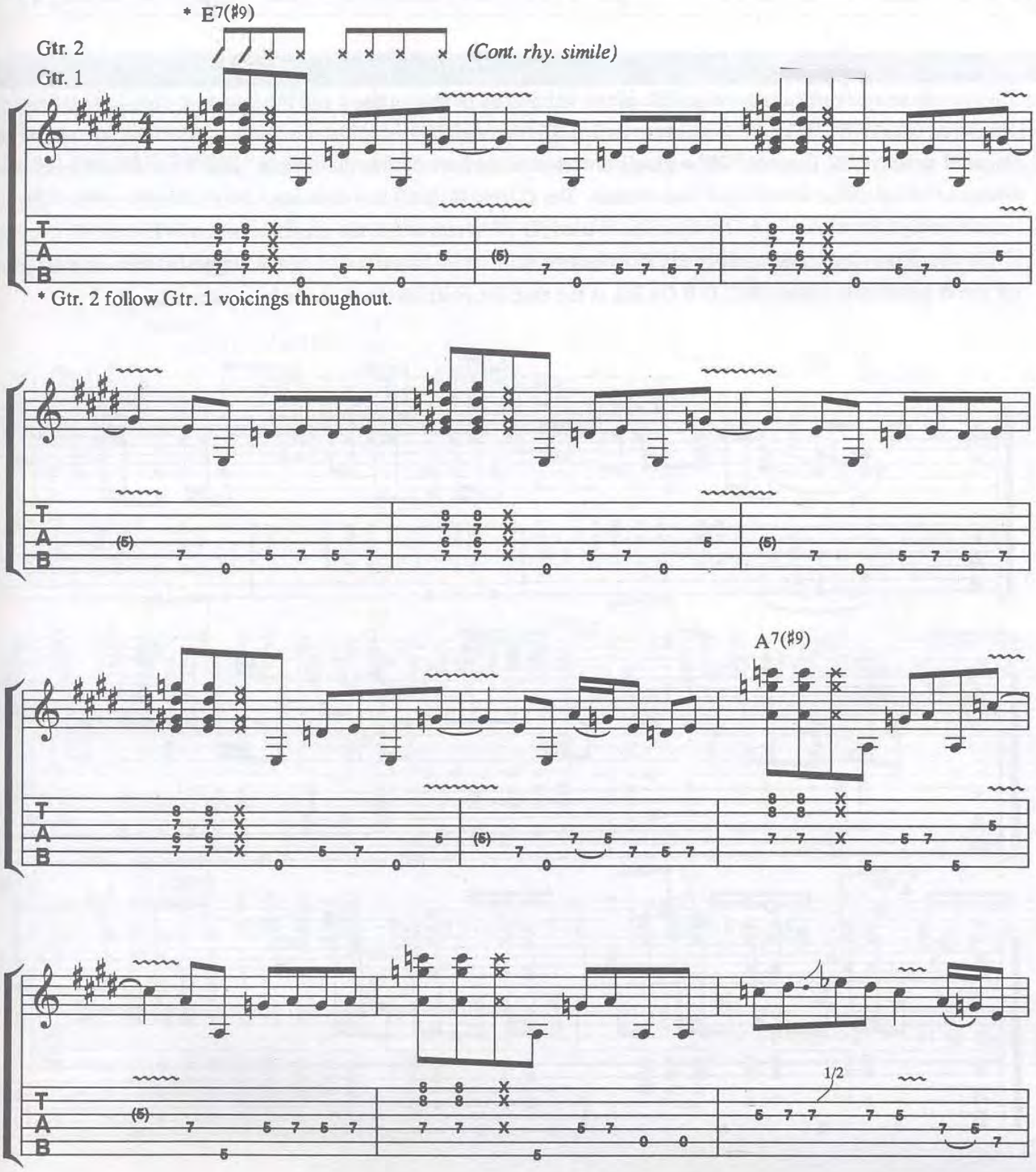
Example 23

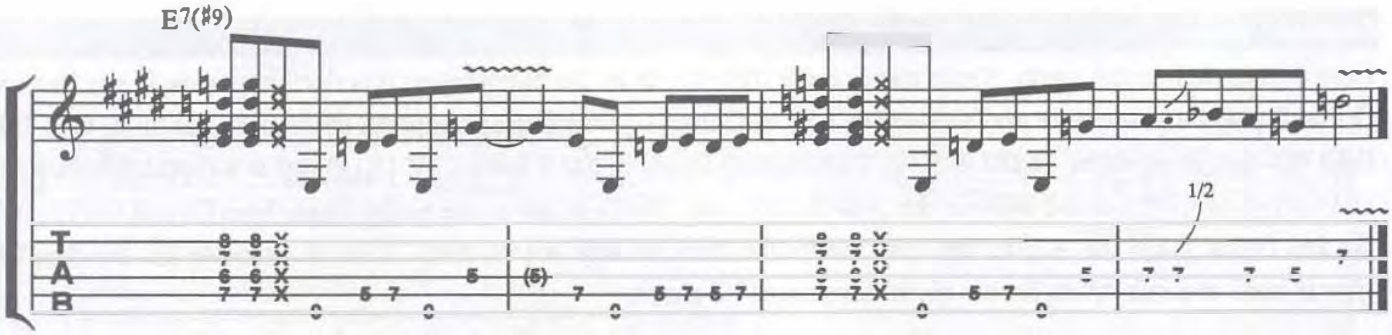
This team-working guitar part in the style of Eric Clapton is here to illustrate how striking the dom7(♯9) sound can be when used sparingly at key moments. We are now in the key of A. Notice how the I chord is played as a straight A major triad bar chord (with doubling on the root and 5th). In bar 5, D7(IV) is found as a typical dominant chord voicing. However, bars 9 and 10 are the hot spots. E7(♯9) is found for the V, and an unexpected D7(♯9) is used for the IV—strange brew, huh? This example is a pillar-like 12-bar blues/rock part in respect to the consistent placement of the chord changes marked by an accented chord on beat 2 and by the A pentatonic minor (A C D E G) lick that runs through every bar.



Example 24

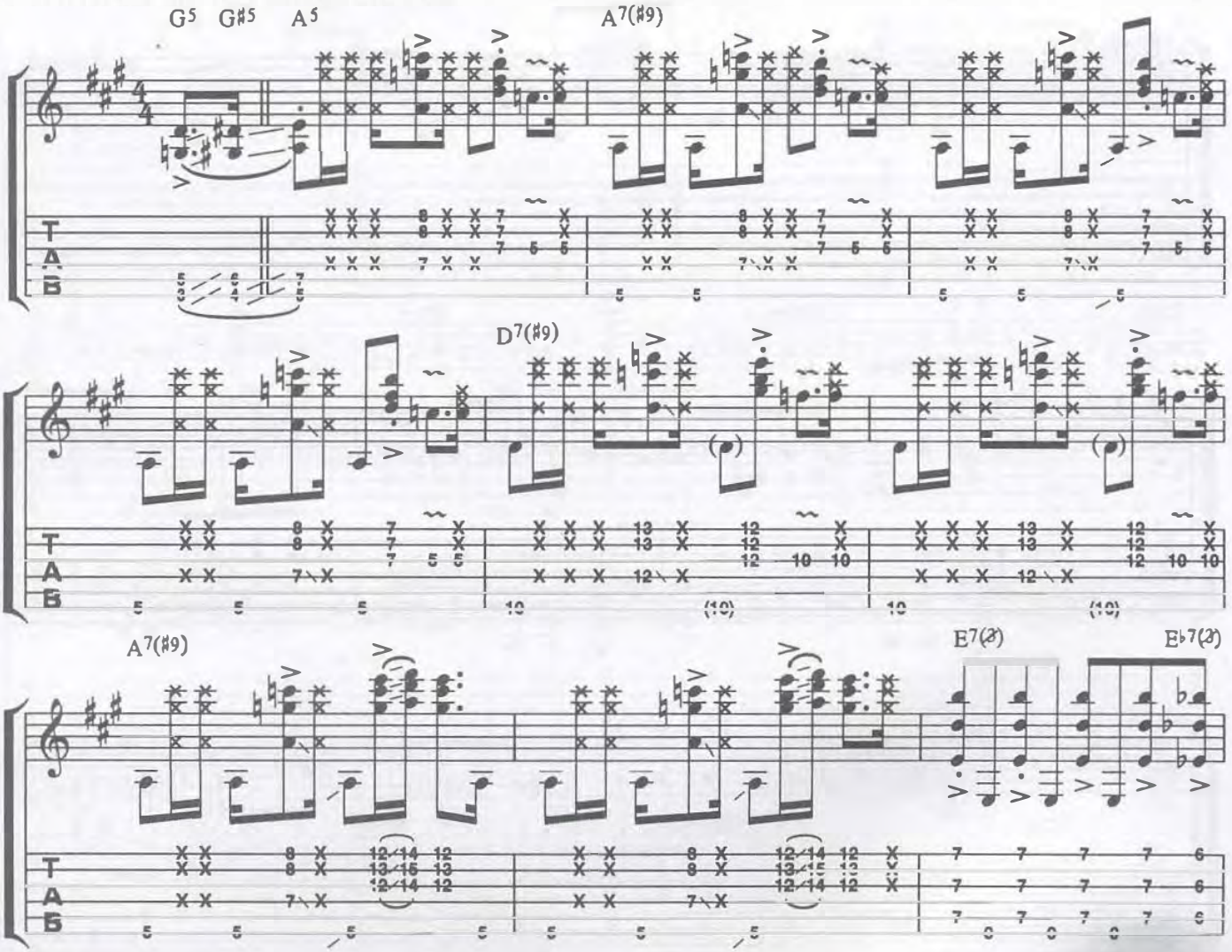
Here comes that sound again. Once more, the E7(♯9) stands as the mainstay to this rhythm part in E a la Hendrix. Guitar 2 plays a percussive and supportive role to Guitar 1—which uses simple E pentatonic minor (E G A B D) licks that put great stress on the ♯9 (G♮). The voicing found in bar 9 for the IV (A) chord is a typical Hendrixism: an implied dom7(♯9) chord without the 3rd. In this case, the C♯ is lost as the pinky finger bars G♮ and C♮ (9th fret), the 3rd finger plays the A (7th fret) and the thumb frets the low A (5th fret). Like in example 25, the dom7(♯9) type is used as a substitute for the plain dominant7 IV chord.

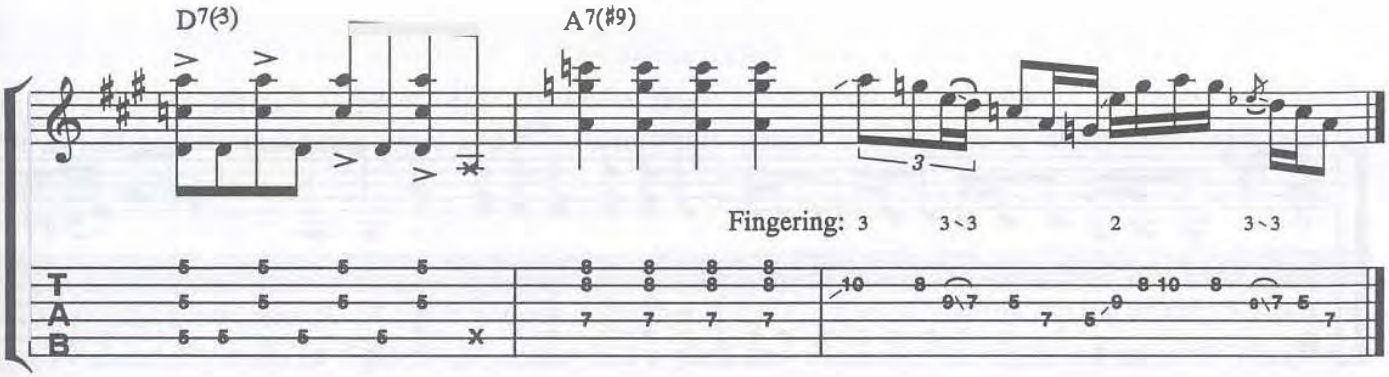




Example 25

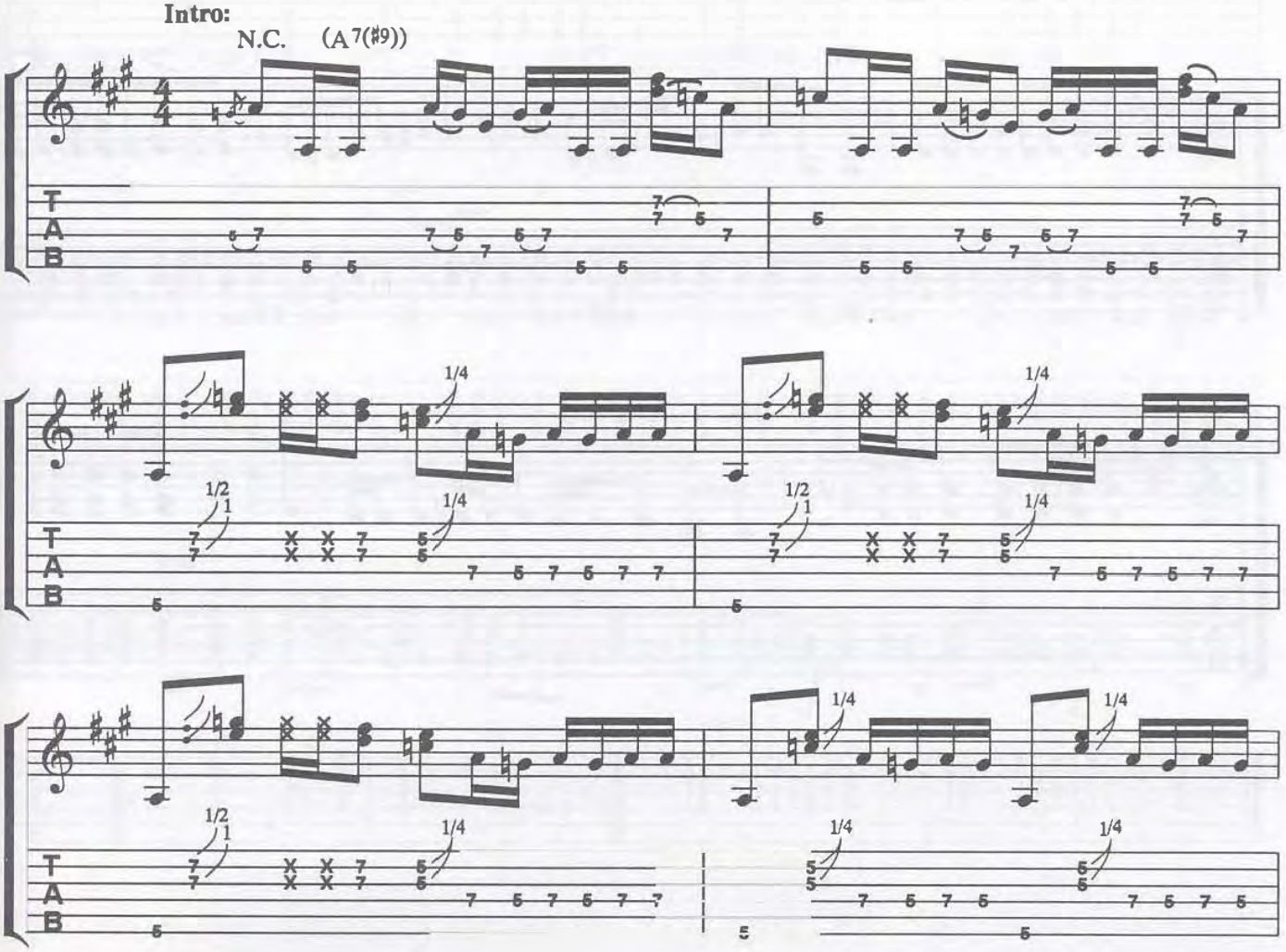
This stands as an even stronger example of the implied dom7(♯9) on the I and IV chords in A, a la Jimi Hendrix. The so-called A7(♯9) (I) chord is missing its 3rd (C♯) as the D7(♯9) also deletes its 3rd (F♯). Both are voiced and fingered exactly like Example 26, with all low root notes fretted with the thumb. Bar 7 has a cool triad move where a C triad slides to a D triad and returns. The C triad (C E G) is a common substitution for a dom7(♯9) and leans heavily toward Am7 (A C E G). The D triad (D F♯ A) represents the presence of the IV(D) chord. Note the E7(3) chord moving chromatically to D7(3) before the I chord in bar 11. See the suggested fret-hand fingering for the A pentatonic minor (A C D E G) lick at the end; the position changes can be a bit tricky.

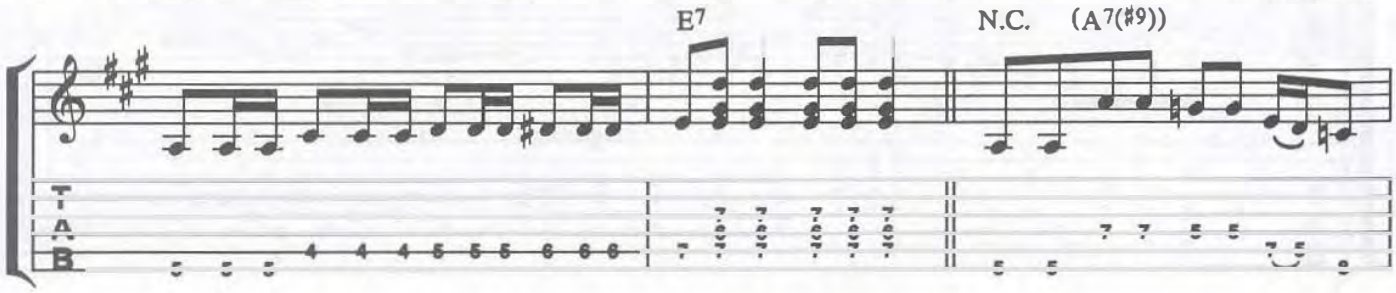


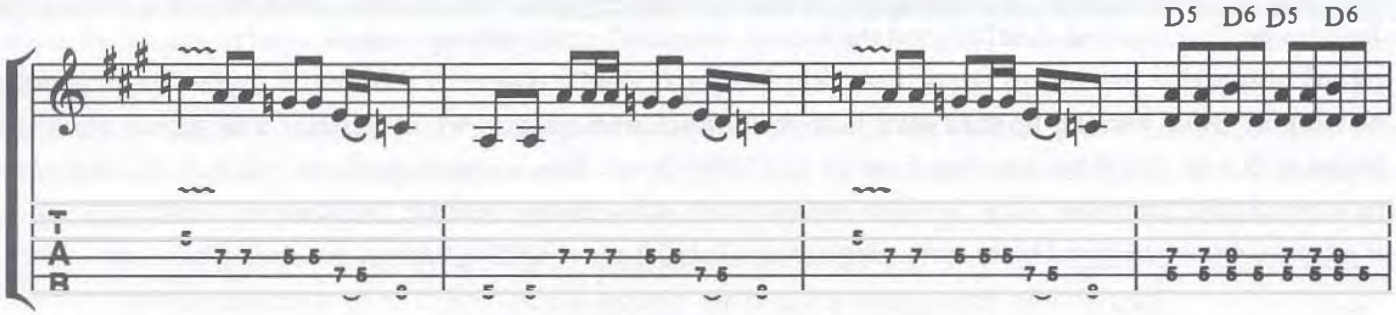


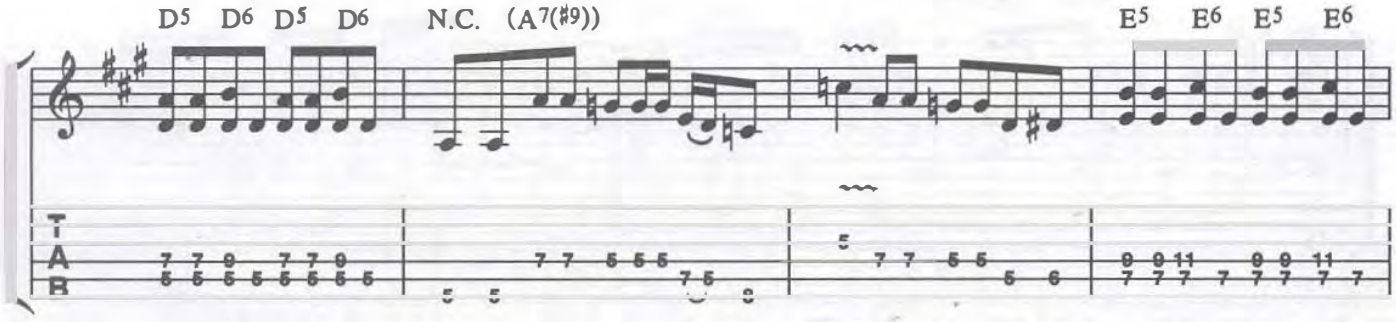
Example 26

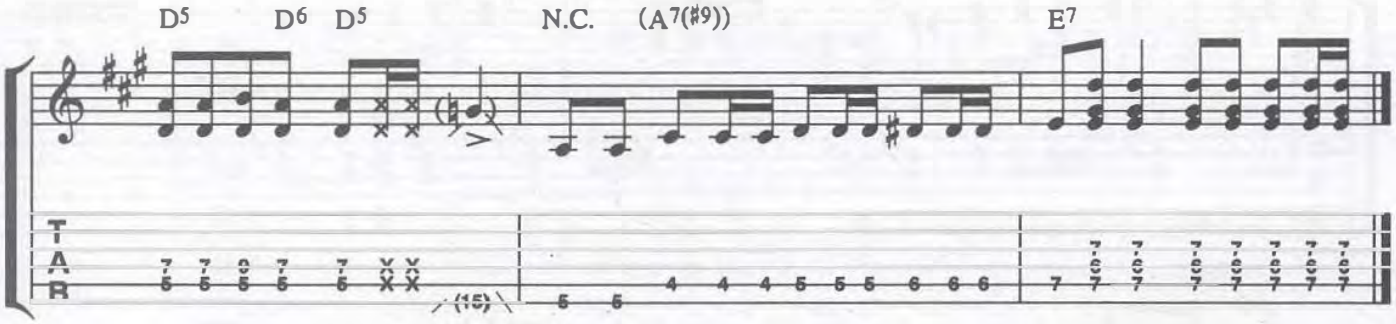
Jimi has the final word on dom7(♯9) and the heavily stressed ♭3 on this killing example of a "rhythm part" he often played on a well-known blues cover tune. Rhythm part? Hardly typical of the kind of rhythm guitar someone would play while backing up their own lead vocal-which was the case with this one. This 12-bar blues form begins with a spirited 8-bar intro based on the I (A7(♯9)) chord. Here and throughout the example, the emphasis is on A pentatonic minor (A C D E G) where the minor 3rd (♯9) is terribly insistent. As a matter of fact, although this is a typical dominant-based blues, not a single major 3rd (C♯) comes up.Dig hard on this one, it's serious.




E7
N.C. (A7(#9))


D5 D6 D5 D6


D5 D6 D5 D6
N.C. (A7(#9))
E5 E6 E5 E6

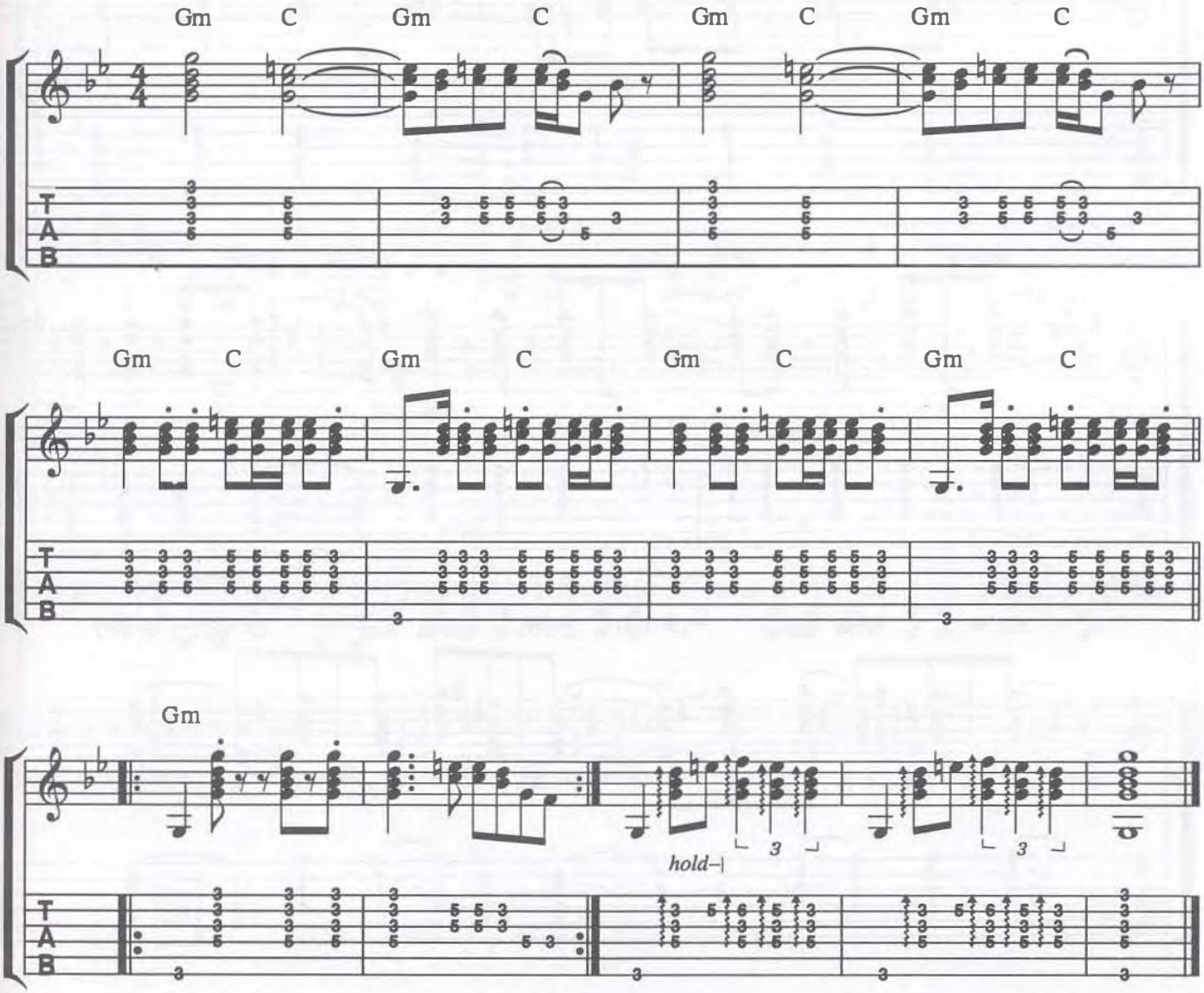

D5 D6 D5
N.C. (A7(#9))
E7

The Minor Triad

The pure minor chord (1 ♭3 5) is somewhat rare in this genre, but has still made its mark. The minor triad has its roots in folk and country blues styles and is decidedly less "urban" and modern in its musical effect than the minor 7th chord.

Example 27

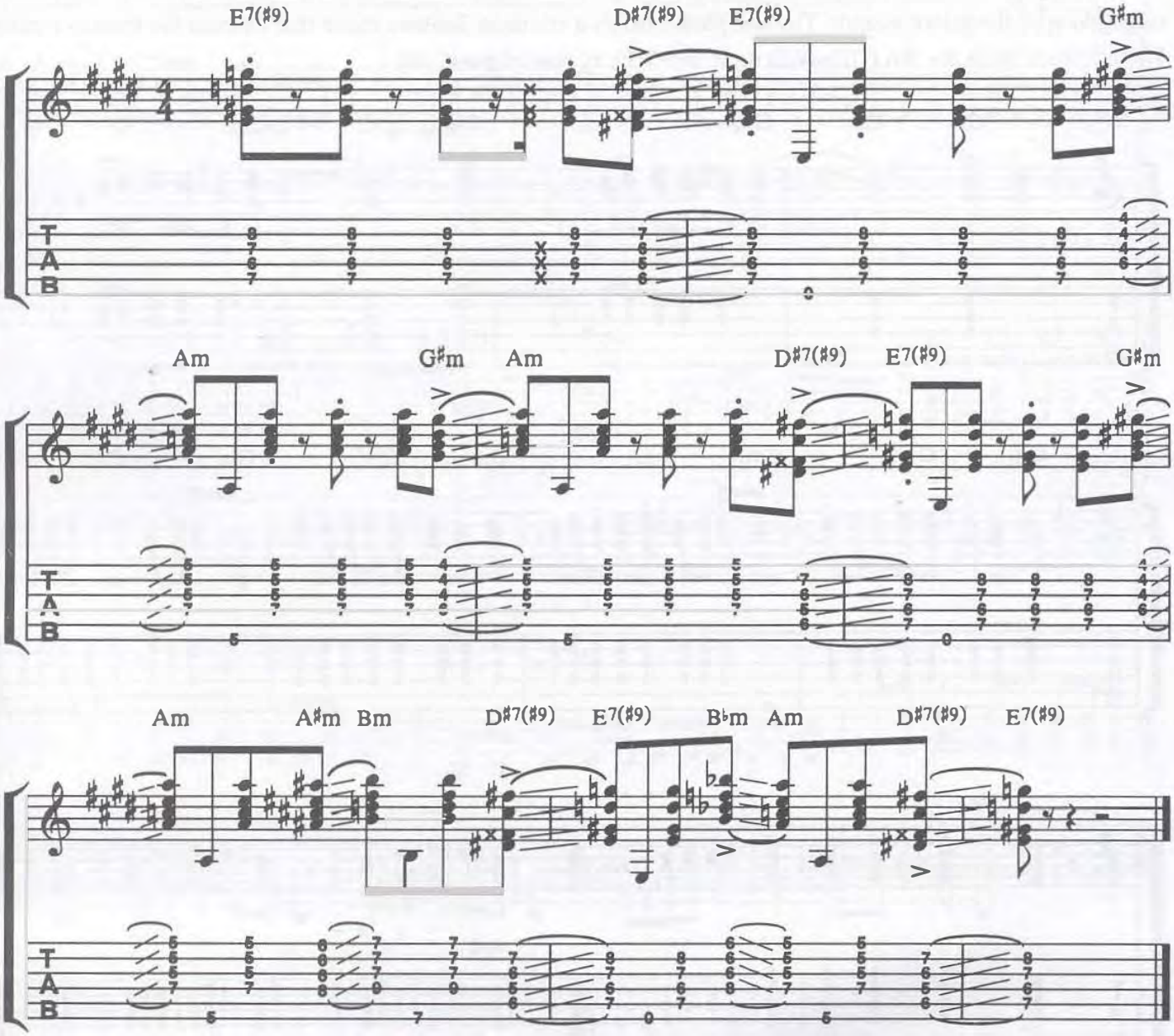
Here is a well-known example of minor blues/rock rhythm guitar a la Carlos Santana. In the key of G minor, the major IV chord (C) tends to "lighten" the atmosphere a good deal whereas if the unaltered minor IV (Cm) were used the effect would be much darker. This example consists of four different phrases that show what Carlos might do with the minor sound. The last phrase offers a common Santana move that extends the triad to a minor 7th momentarily as the 5th (D) travels up to the ♭7(F) by way of the ♮6 (E).



Example 28

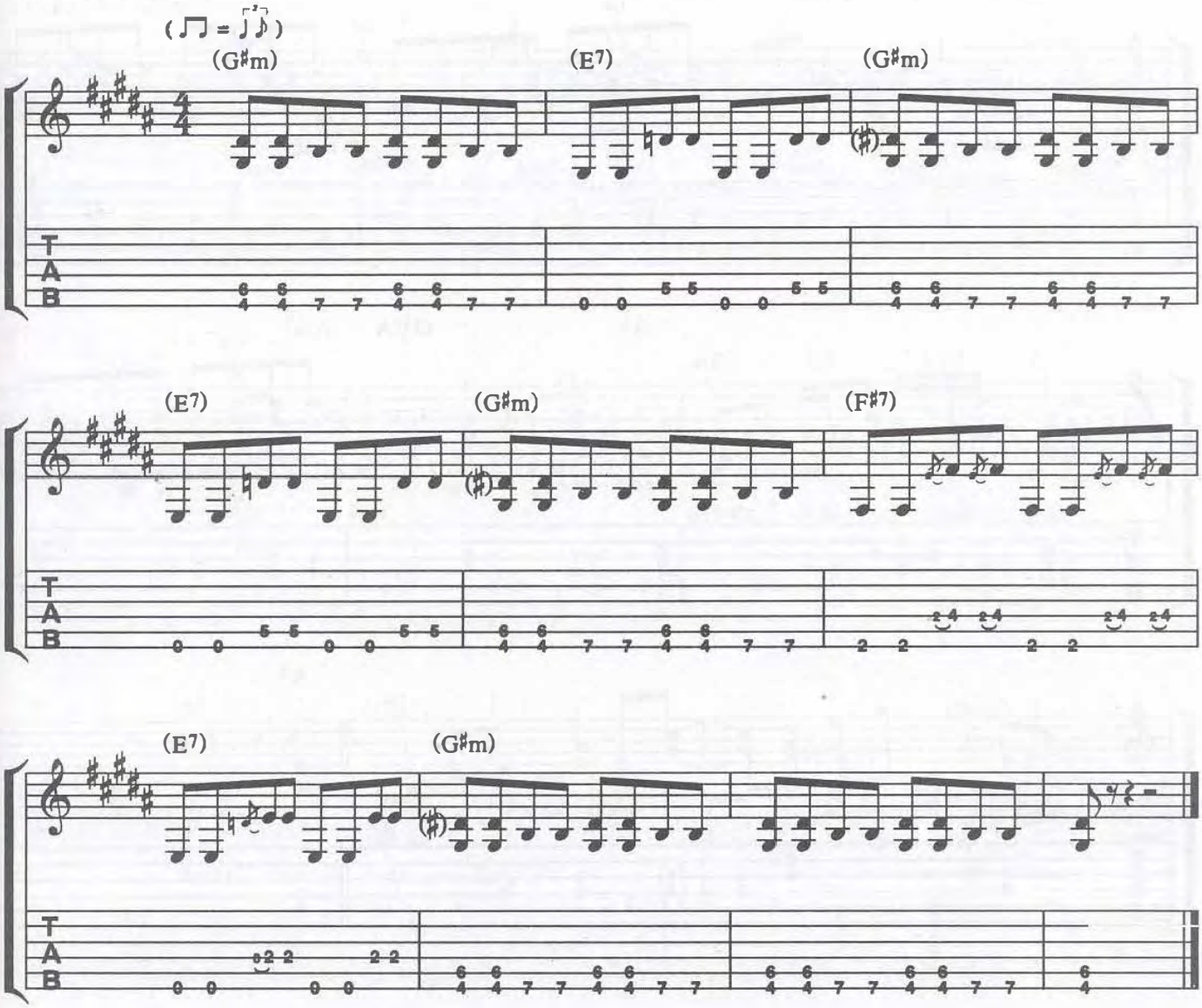
Here is a very original progression using minor chords a la Hendrix. It tends to be dark and blues-oriented and is therefore written in the key of E. Once again the Purple Haze voicing (E7(♯9)) is the I chord at the heart of it. Four times throughout the example this chord is approached from below by a slide, accenting the D♯7(♯9) on the "and of 4."

The same half-step connection is used preceding the IV (Am) and V (Bm) chords with G♯m and A♯m respectively. A♯m is harmonically renamed as B♭m in bar 7 as it descends downward to Am.



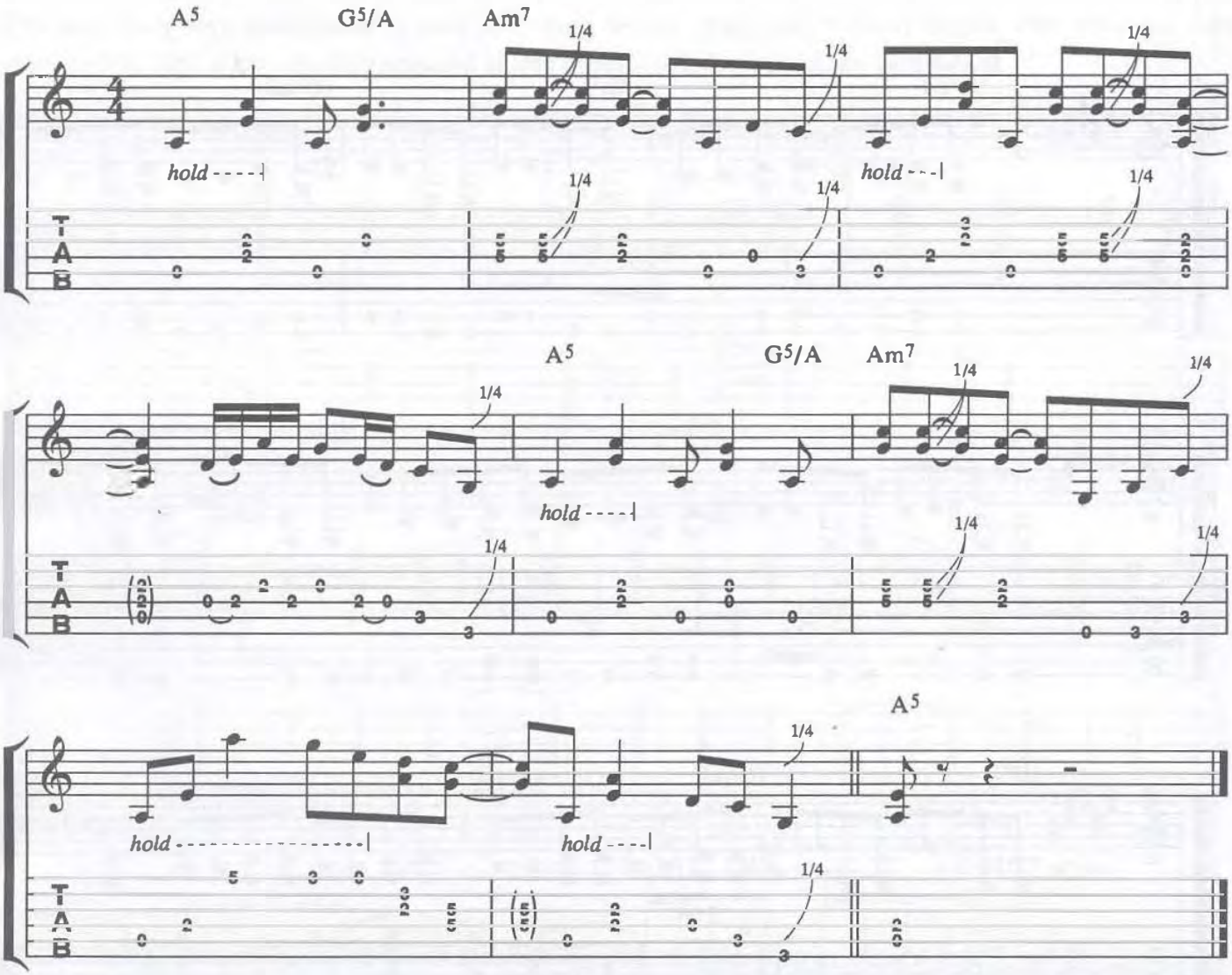
Example 29

This is a great example of how the boogie pattern can be mutated to suit a minor chord. In the key of G♯m, the altered boogie pattern involves the ♭3 (B) of the I (G♯m) chord instead of the usual use of the 5th and 6th. The E7 stands as the ♭VI chord and appears as a dominant sound (without the 3rd). The outcome is a modern treatment of blues a la Stevie Ray Vaughan.



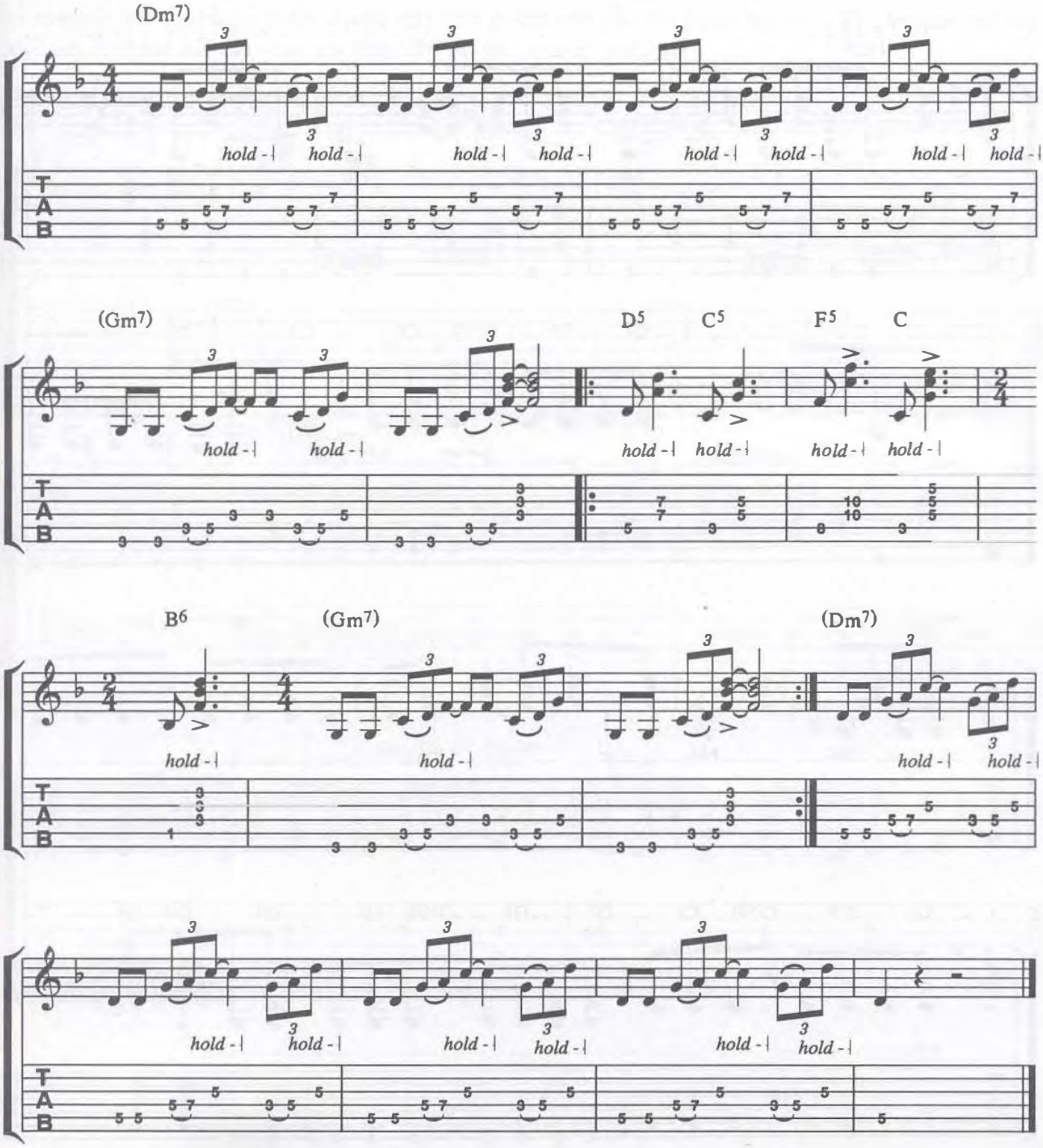
Example 30

Am7 is the home base for this, a classic Johnny Winter guitar part. It makes use of three different open strings, and can be played in 2nd position throughout while reaching up to the 5th fret for the Am7 double-stop (bar 2). This is the kind of rhythm part that can spur endless variations, so I recommend much experimentation in this groove and style of playing.



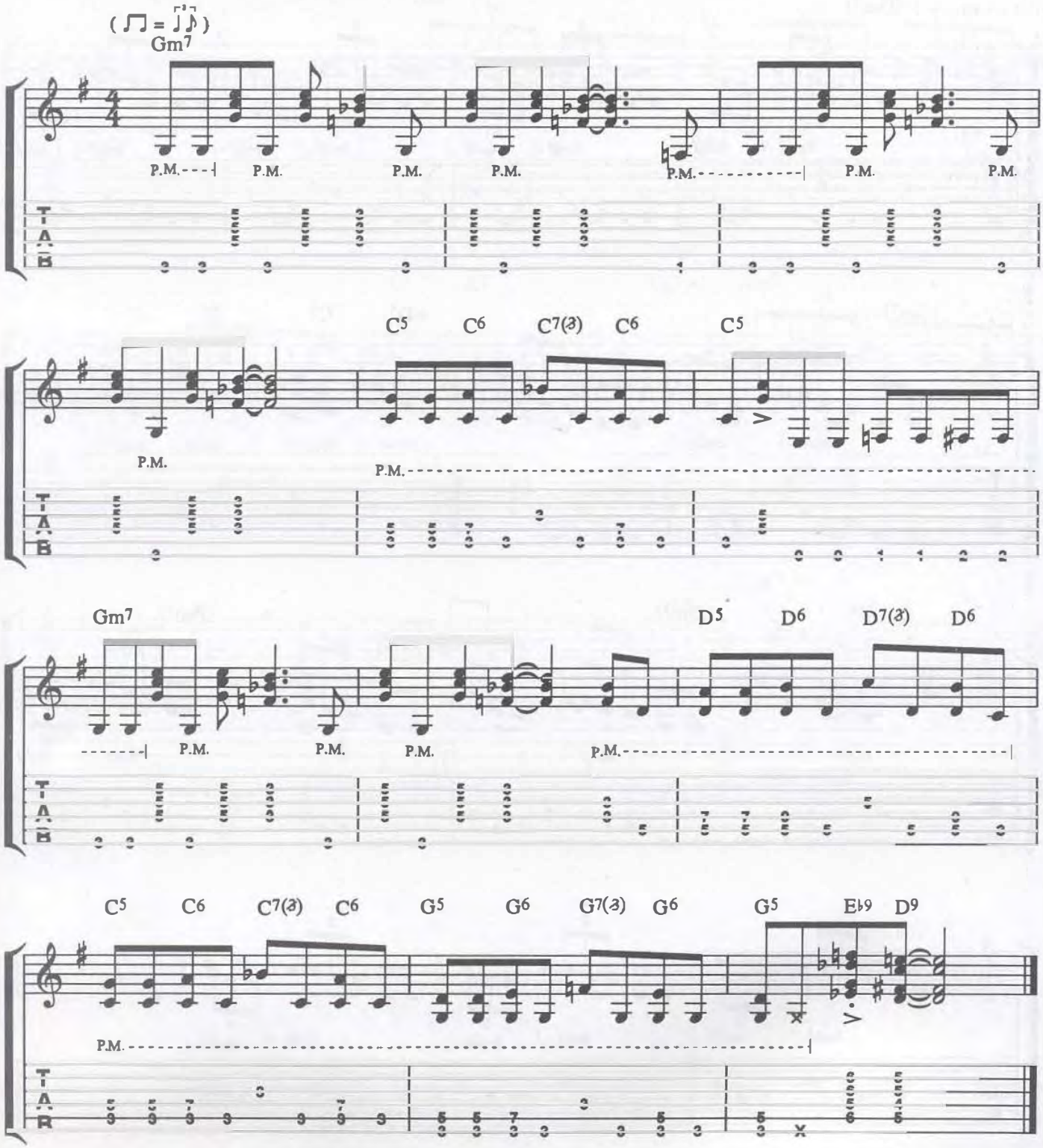
Example 31

This archetype inspired by Martin Barre of Jethro Tull is driven by a riff that is harmonically flexible enough to be played in a dominant 7 context as well as its usage here in (D) minor. Since no 3rd is heard, it can swing either way. On the change to the IV (Gm7) though, a full minor 7 quality is stressed. The phrase within the repeats (bars 7-11) makes use of a progression of chords commonly found in Dm, further confirming the minor tonality.



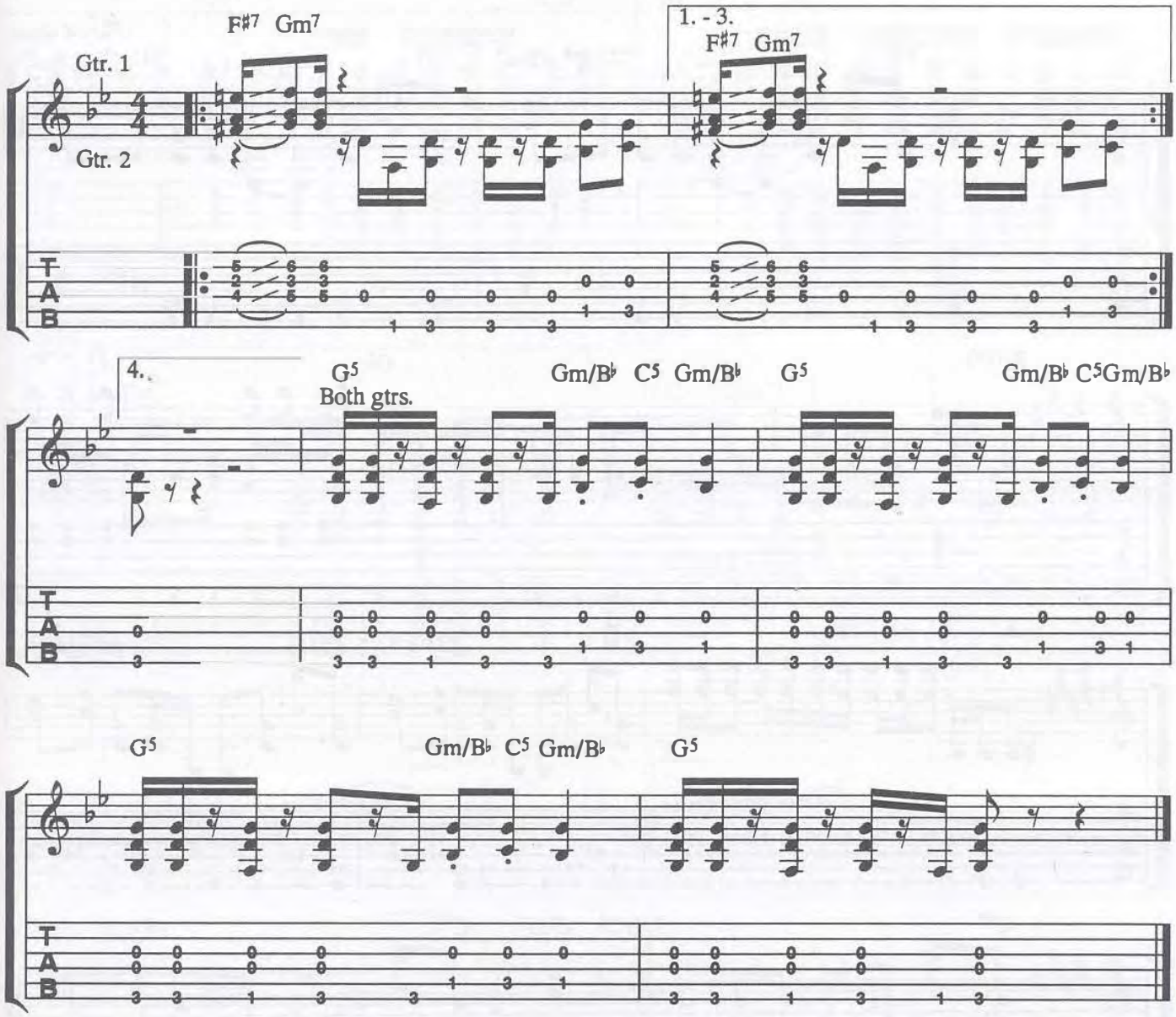
Example 32

ZZ Top is well known for pushing the minor 7 issue over a dominant 7 situation. Due in part to them, the minor 7 chord has become a staple of rock's contribution to blues forms. In this case a la Billy Gibbons, Gm7 is sold hard in the G major key. This is a sort of bastardized Texas shuffle that gets a good deal of its punch from the boogie pattern, played on all the chord changes (I, IV and V). This 12-bar blues form ends with a standard blues turnaround move: the V (D9) chord is approached from a half-step above (E♭9).



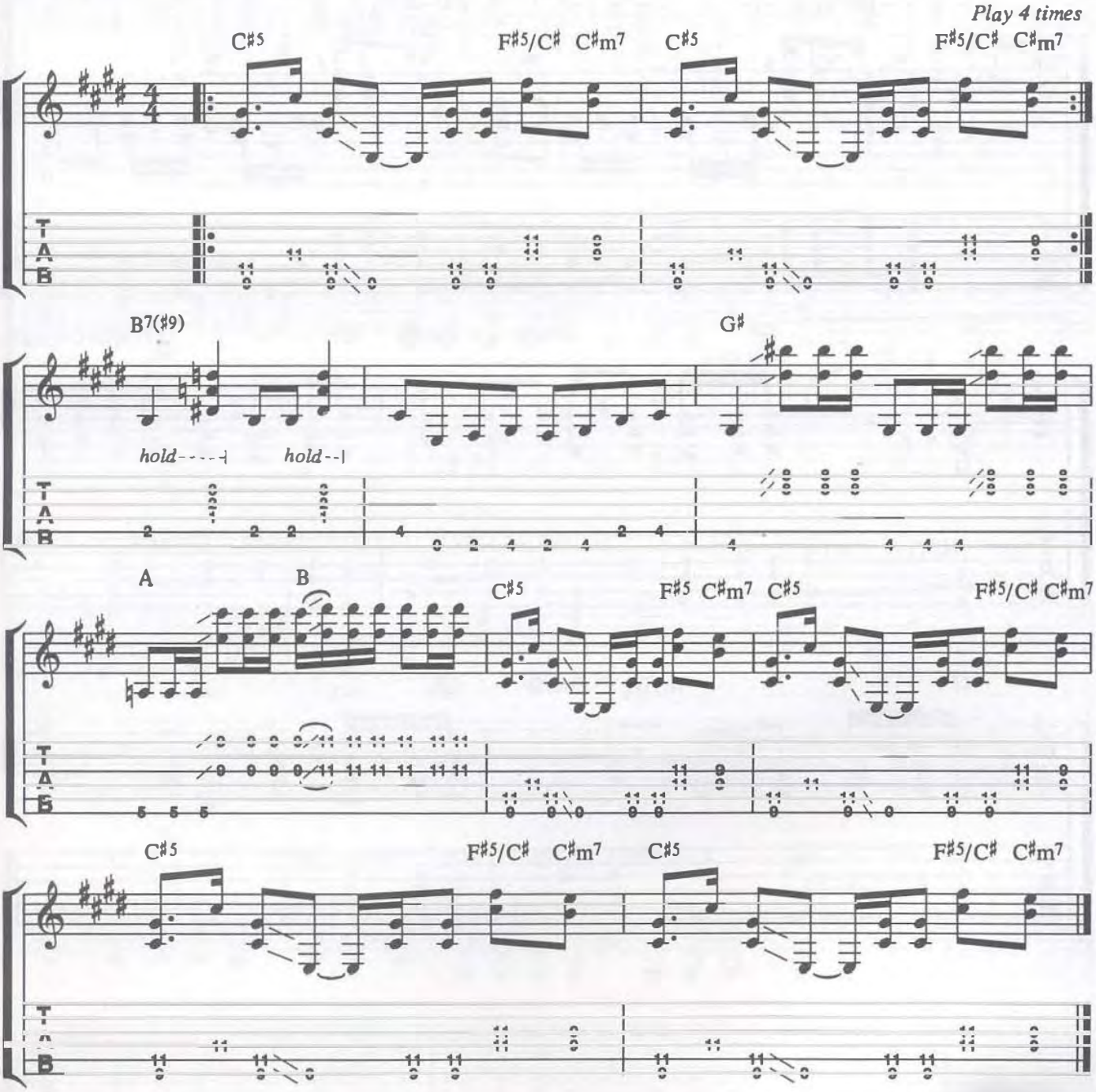
Example 33

Another ZZ Top model, this one specifically in Gm (note the key signature), illustrating two guitar parts working together, creates a call and response effect. These two parts can be played by one guitar with limited difficulty. The first phrase has Guitar 1 playing a minor 7th voicing not as commonly found in blues and rock as it is in jazz and other styles. It spells (from low to high) G, B♭, F, and it is approached from a half-step below with a slide. In response, Guitar 2 has a nice part that is based on double-stops using open strings. The next phrase that closes the example is based on the Guitar 2 part, only both guitars now play the figure together. This is some real cool, laid-back stuff that you can work into many Gm rhythm parts of your own.



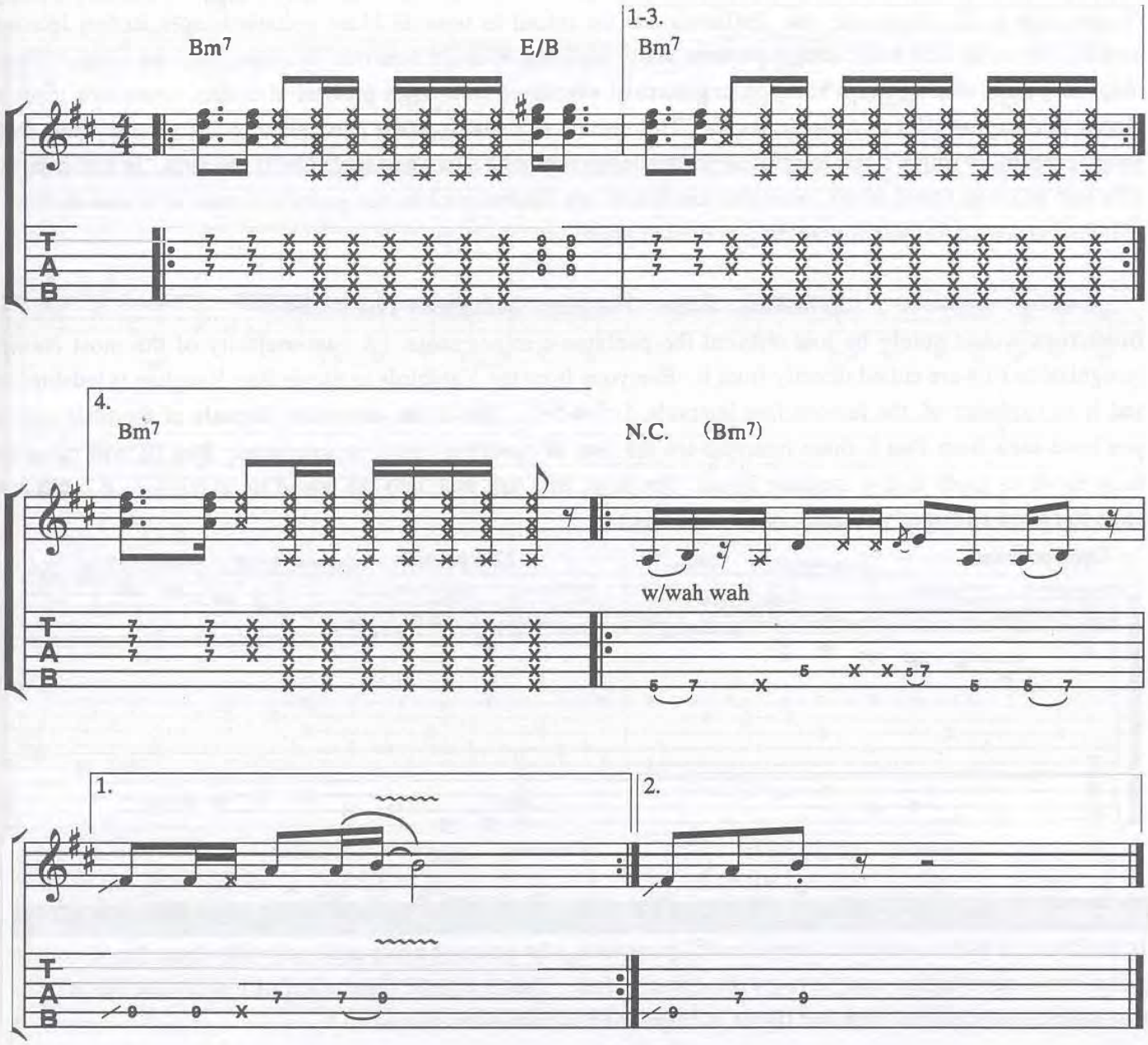
Example 34

This one kicks butt in C♯ minor. The low ♭3 (E) of the I chord is played as an open E and brings a lot of heaviness to this rhythm part by Robin Trower. C♯m7 is actually heard on "the and of 4" (bars 1 and 2) in 11th position. This barre-type of voicing on strings 4-3-2 is the most common minor 7 guitar voicing in blues/rock. Also intrinsic to the style is the use of a IV chord with its 5th in the bass, such is the case here with the F♯5/C♯. The second phrase of this example exudes a strong chord progression of B7(♯9) (♭VII) to G♯ (V) to A (♭VI) to B (♭VII) resolving to C♯m7 again. Most notable are the quick moves from the low roots of the G♯, A and B chords on the 6th string to the double stops that comprise the 5th and 3rd of each chord. Make this as clean as possible without allowing unwanted open strings to ring out.



Example 35

As mentioned in the last example, the minor 7th bar voicing on strings 4 - 3 - 2 is crucial to heavy blues guitar. We are now in the key of Bm, again in the style of Robin Trower, and all strings are to be hit where x's are shown, so your fret hand must mute carefully. Incidentally, the further towards the nut that you mute, the more bass the muted strings will give off, which is desirable for a heavy sound. The ending phrase uses B pentatonic minor (B D E F♯ A) to create the simple, melodic ending.



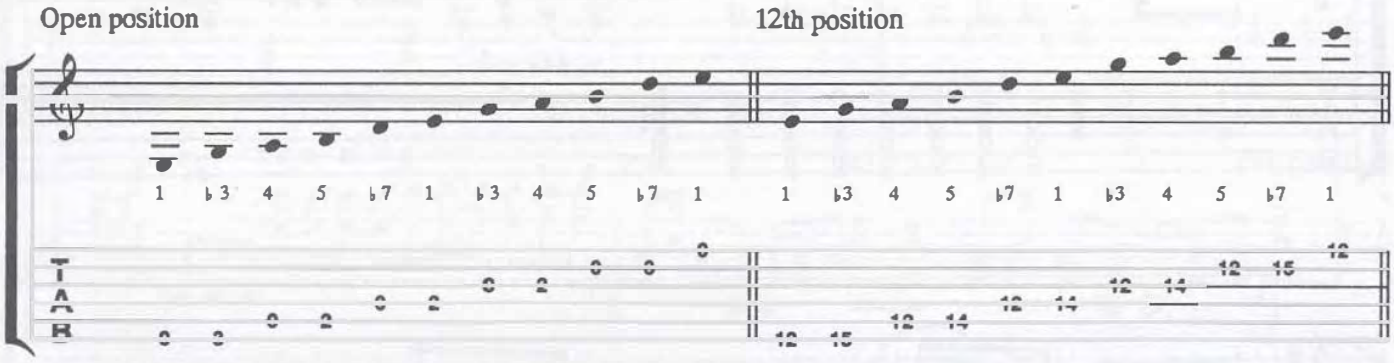
PART II: RIFFS

A riff is commonly understood to be a repetitive single-line idea. In being the main thrust behind blues/rock, the guitar's role outside of basic background rhythm playing is to lead the band with single-line riffs that very often include chords as well.

In formative years, blues/rock groups were often one-guitar bands and the single guitar player wore both lead and rhythm hats to fill the music out. Influence can be traced to seminal blues guitarist/singer Robert Johnson backing his vocal with basic boogie patterns while throwing in single line riffs that identified the songs. Where blues may tend to play down riffs, putting them at even keel with other musical elements, blues/rock tends to glorify and exploit riffs as melodic hooks. This section deals with guitar parts making use of everything from simple, repetitive single lines, to difficult lines interspersed with small and large chord voicings. In any case, the riffs and voicings found in the examples that follow are fundamental to this guitar-oriented style and should be absorbed and used as tools for building your own improvised guitar parts.

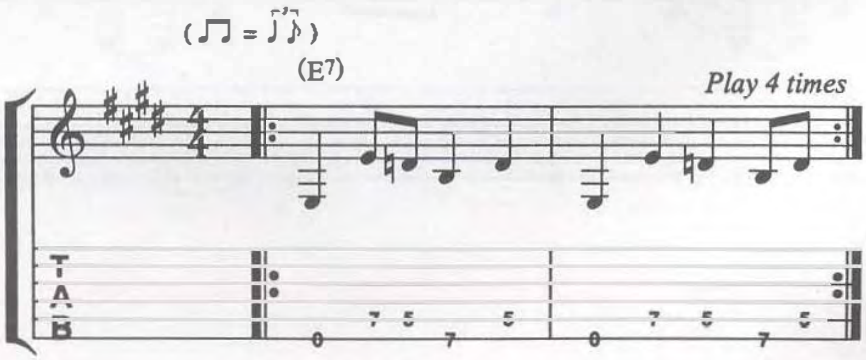
Pentatonic Minor: The Scale That Rules The Sound

Blues/rock would surely be lost without the pentatonic minor scale. A vast majority of the most classic, recognizable riffs are culled directly from it. Everyone from the Yardbirds to Stevie Ray Vaughan is indebted to, and is an exploiter of, the famous five intervals, 1-♭3-4-5-♭7. This is the intervallic formula of the scale and, as you have seen from Part I, these intervals are the root of countless chord progressions. Part III will cover the scale in all its glory in five position forms. For now, let's just tune into the sound by playing an E pentatonic scale in closed and open positions, one octave apart.



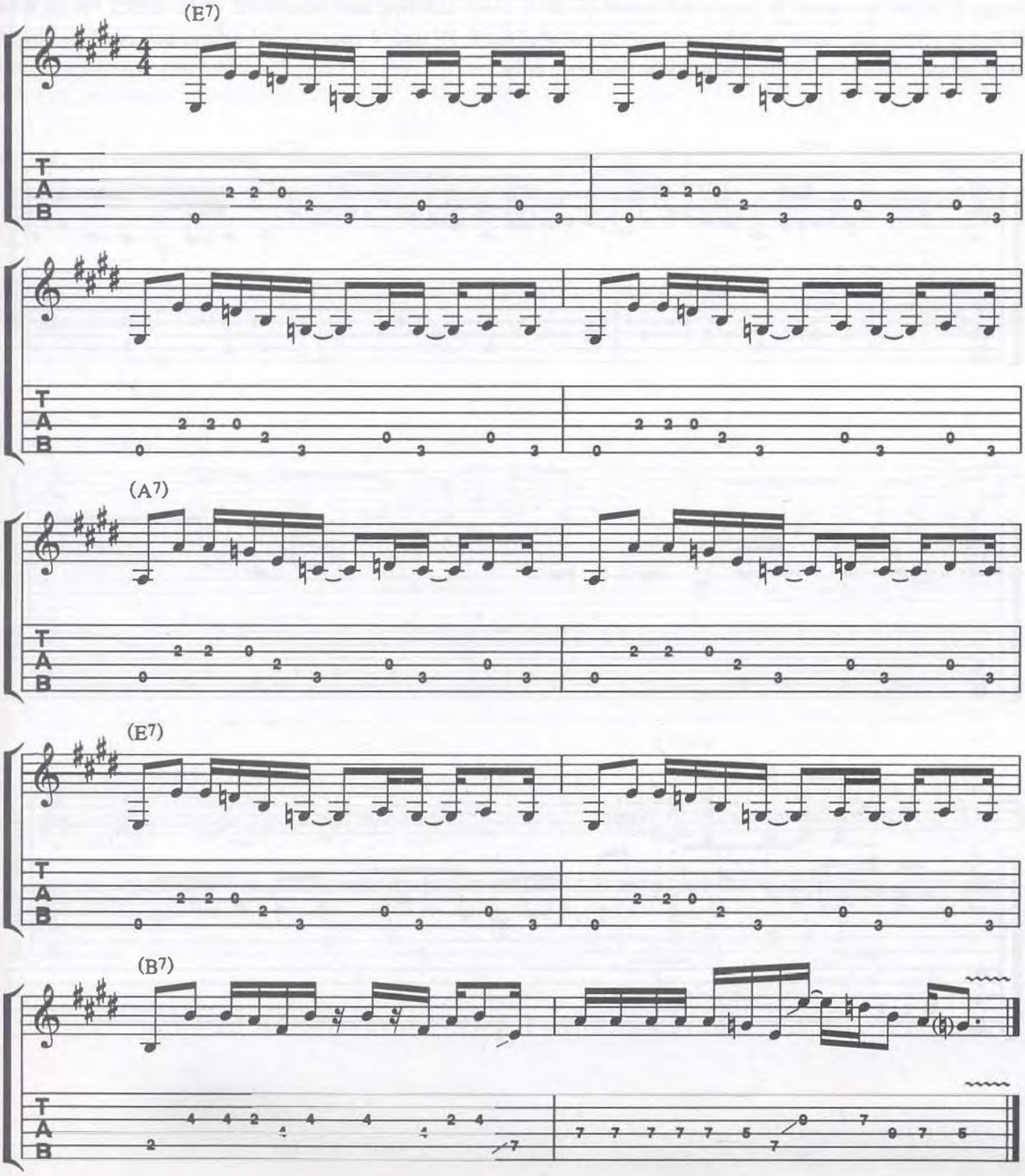
Example 36

In the key of E is this early Led Zeppelin riff, pinpointing the union of blues and rock with a bass line doubled by guitar one octave higher and played with a shuffle feel. This is a good illustration of how in the hands of rock musicians, a background bass line figure is heightened to main-hook status.



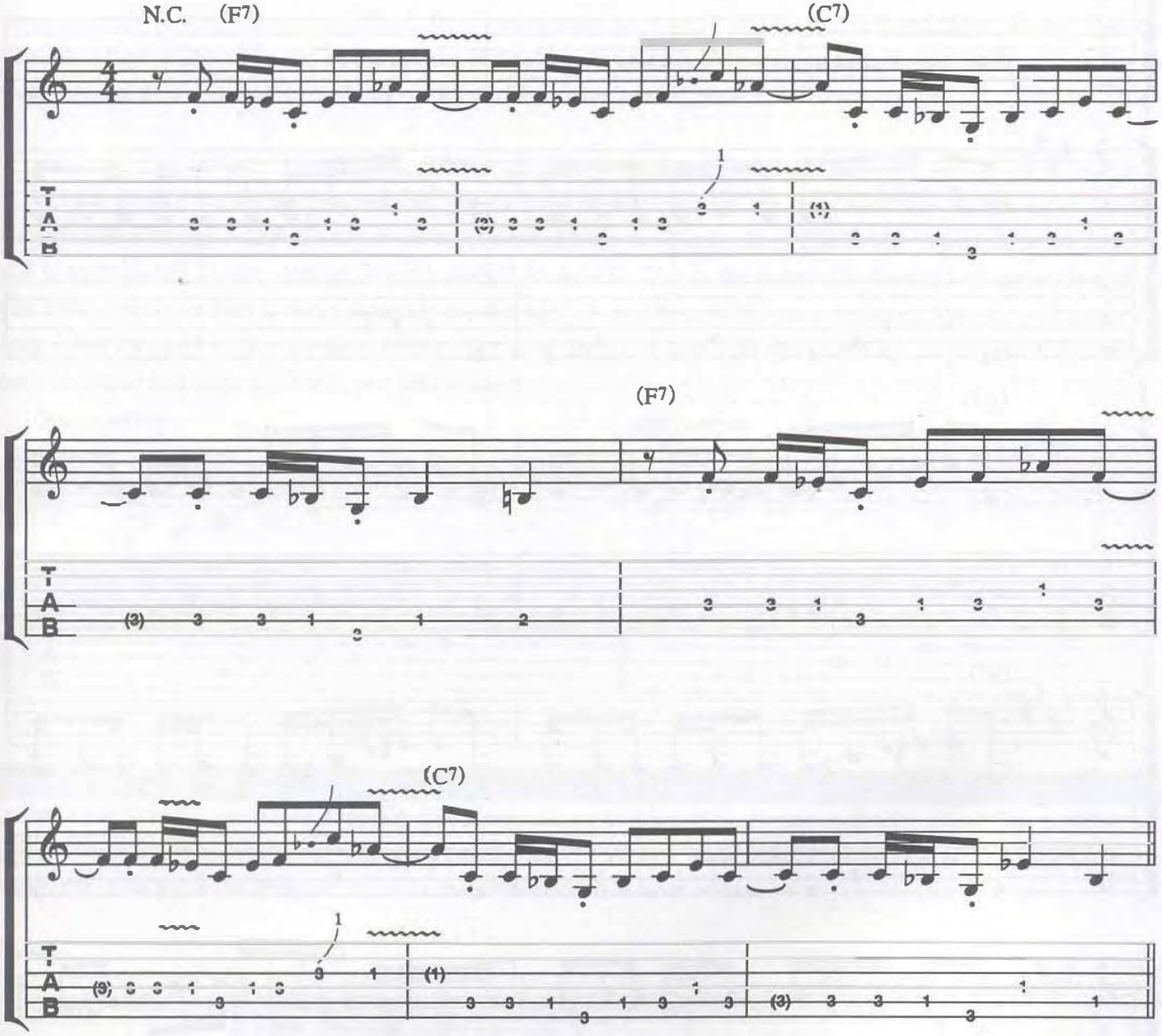
Example 37

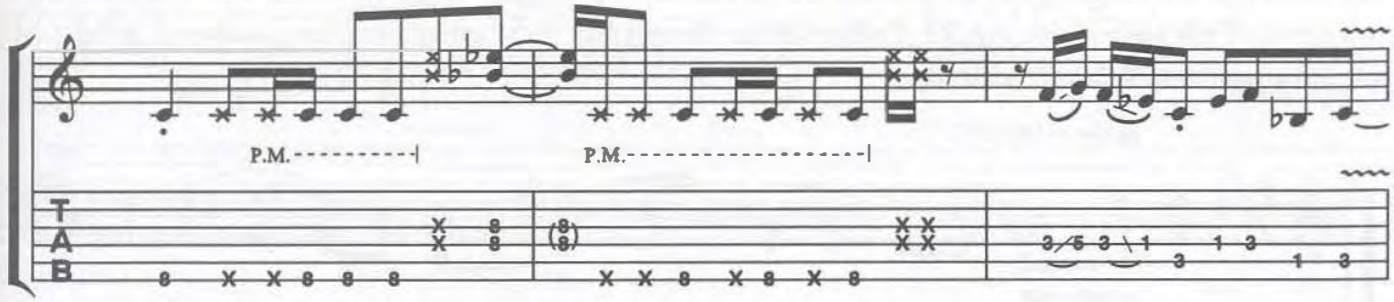
Jimmy Page again, with a lesson on writing a "guitar melody" for a 12-bar blues—which incidentally would be near impossible an animal to find in traditional blues. We remain in the key of E, using E pentatonic minor (E G A B D) as the basis. However, this riff implies a "minor key blues" by virtue of the appearance of A pentatonic minor (A C D E G) played on the change to the IV in bar 5. The heaviness of this riff is due in part to the low, open position it's played in, making use of four open strings.

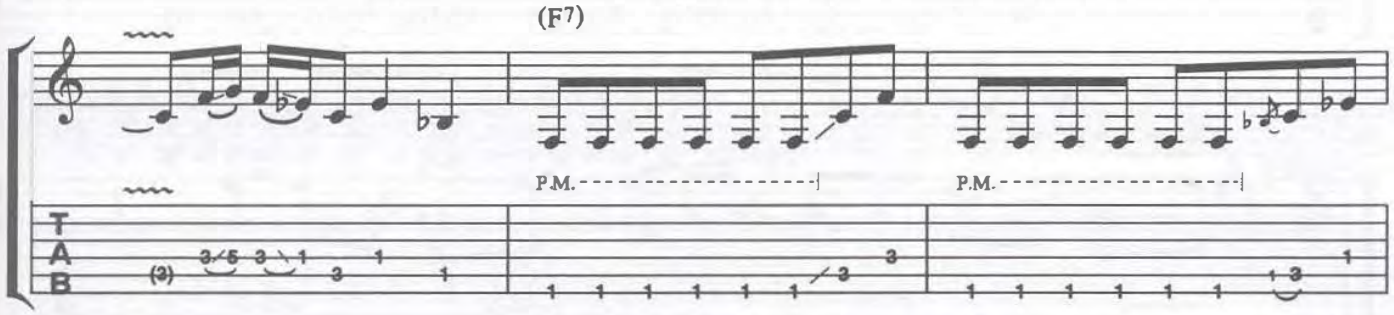


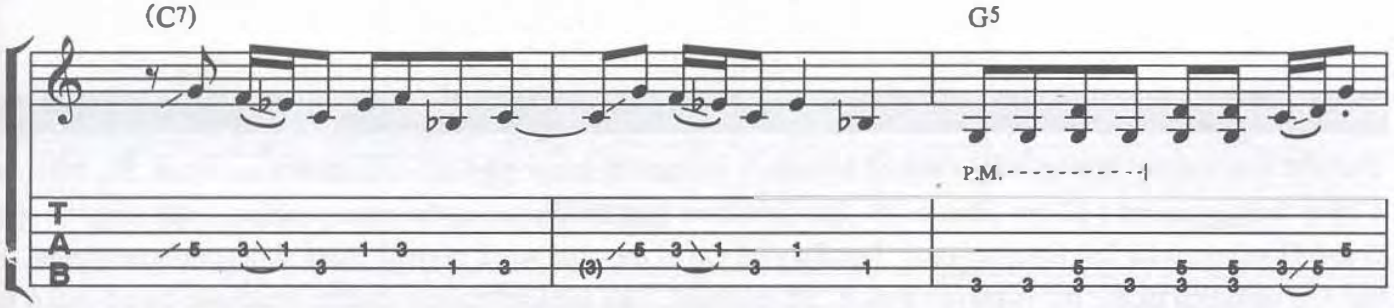
Example 38

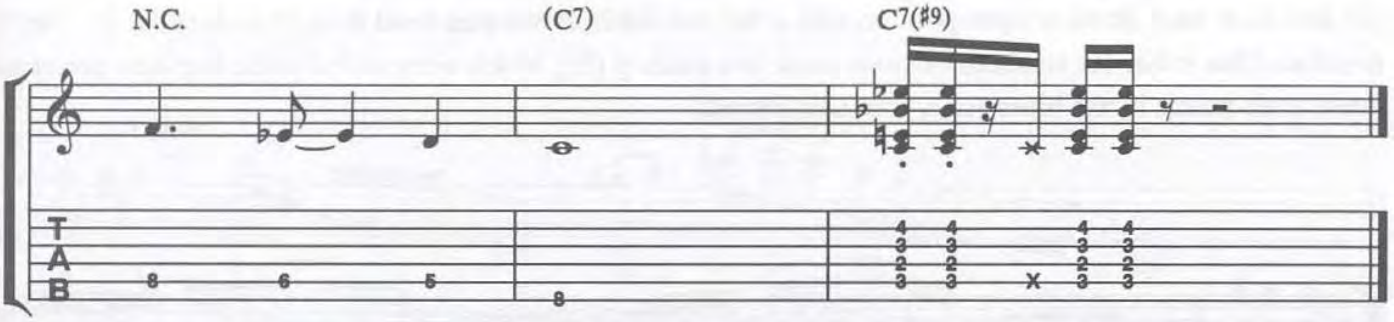
Ritchie Blackmore of Deep Purple fame is responsible for this cool example in C. Although the chord change implications are deceptive, the meat of this riff is based on F pentatonic minor (F A♭ B♭ C E♭) and C pentatonic minor (C E♭ F G B♭), which obviously share many common tones. The opening eight bars alternate between F and C pentatonic minor, with a B♮ passing tone in bar 4. The next 12 bars (after the double bar line) stand as another 12-bar blues guitar melody. The implied blues changes are found in parenthesis. Note the slides in bars 11, 12, 15, 16 and 17 to be played with the 3rd finger for maneuverability. The implied V chord (G7, bar 17) brings in a partial use of G pentatonic minor (G B♭ C D F), showing that blues/rock often makes use of three different pentatonic minor scales based on the roots of the I, IV and V chords. It's safe to say most traditional blues music uses the tonic (I) pentatonic minor scale only.




P.M.
P.M.
T
A
B

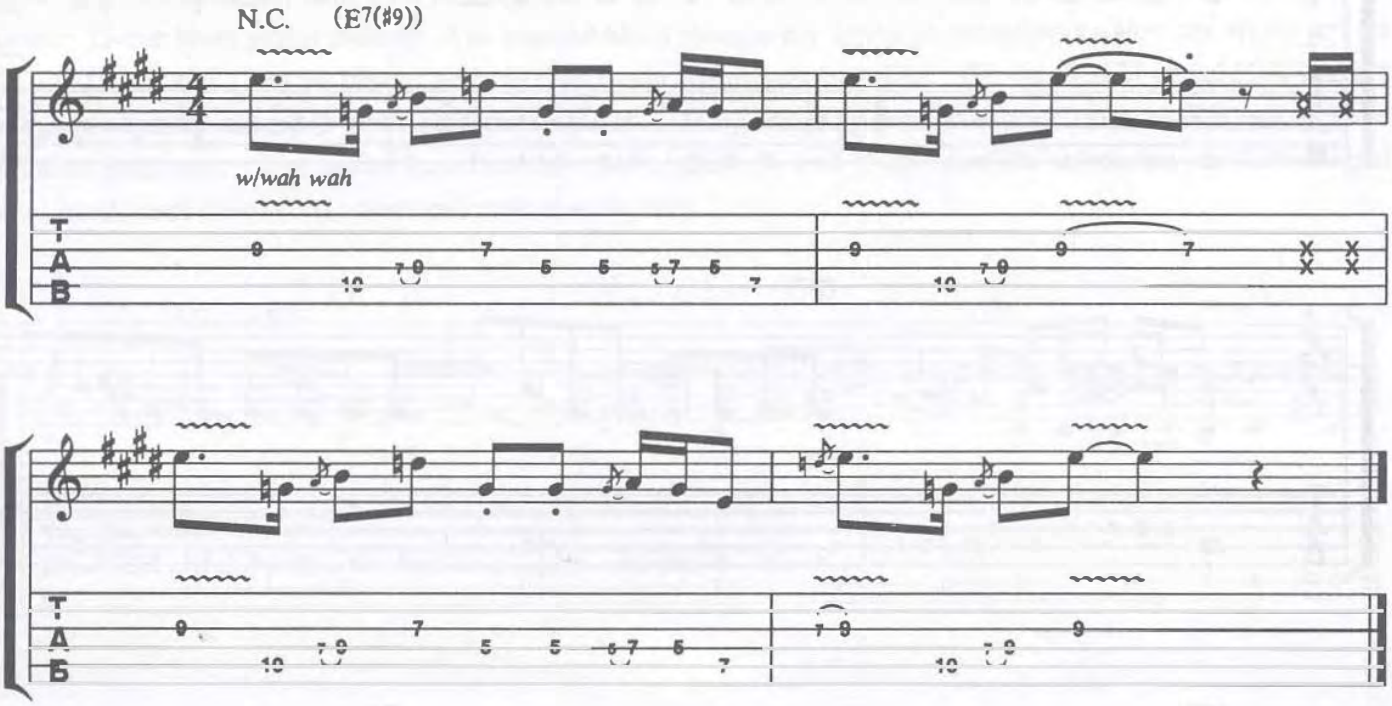

(F7)
P.M.
P.M.
T
A
B


(C7)
G5
P.M.
T
A
B


N.C.
(C7)
C7(♯9)
T
A
B

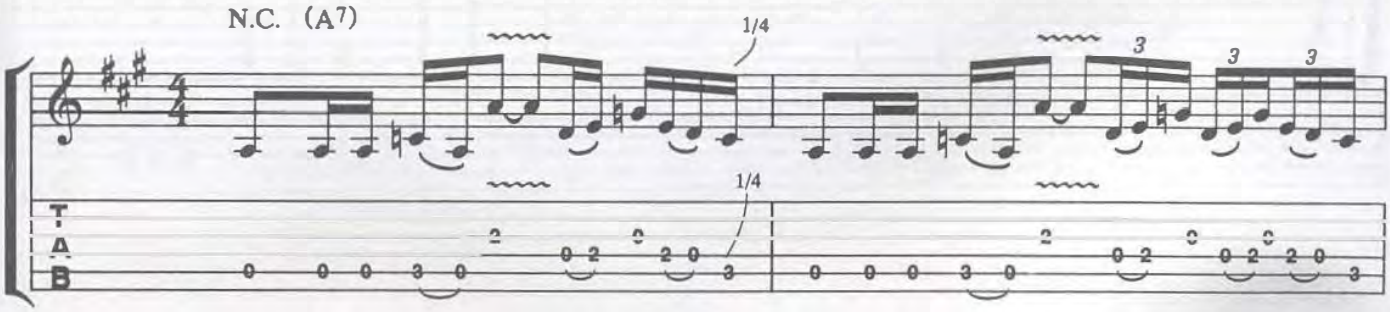
Example 39

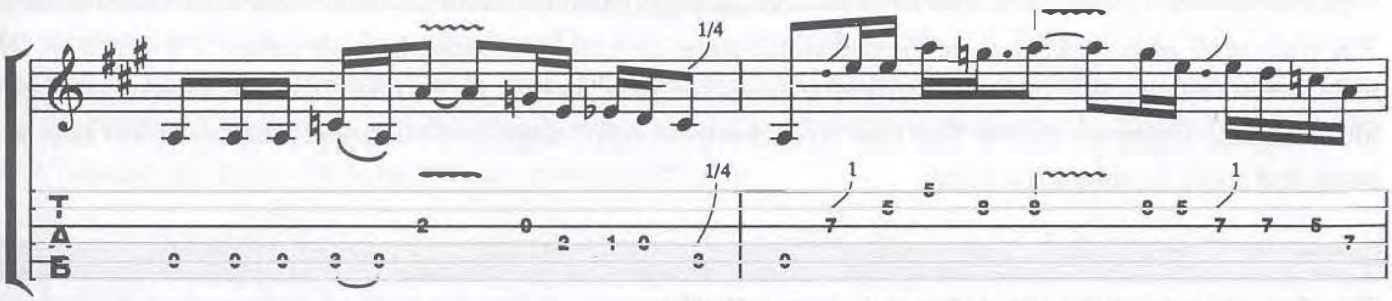
The notes that this Hendrix line are built on are exclusively E pentatonic minor (E G A B D). The riff straddles two forms of the scale in 5th and 7th positions.Make the position shifts smooth and use a wah wah pedal to help teach your guitar to speak Hendrixese.

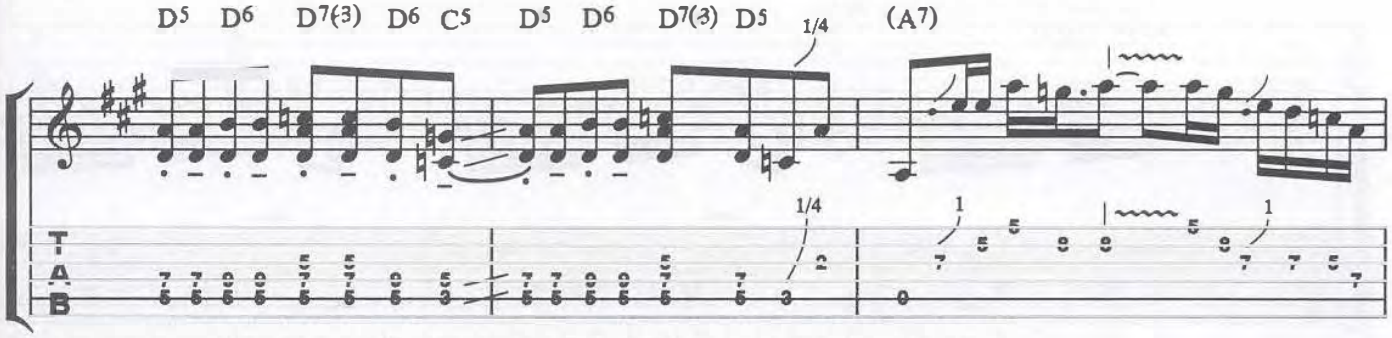


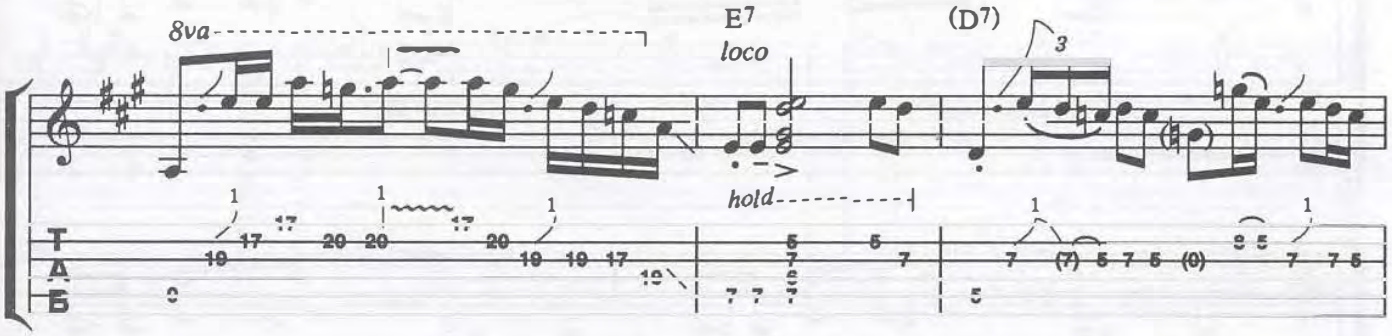
Example 40

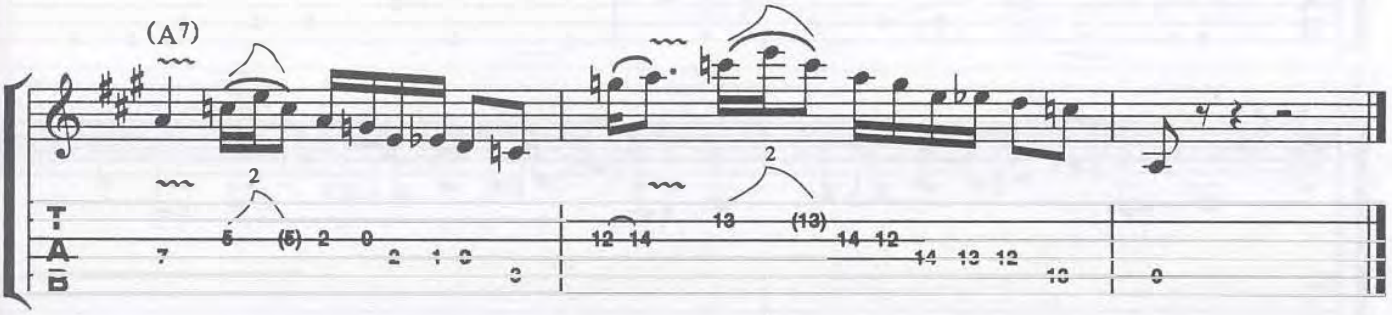
This riff a la Johnny Winter makes use of several A pentatonic minor (A C D E G) positions: open, 5th, 12th and 17th in the context of a 12-bar blues in A. The first three bars are played in the open position, exploiting the open D and G strings with fast hammer-ons. Tip: Stay on top of the time when playing these sixteenth-note triplets. In bar 4, a variation of the riff is played 8va, in 5th position. The familiar boogie pattern returns in bars 5 and 6 for the change to the IV (D7) chord. Another variation of the signature riff is then played in 17th position (bar 8). The only chord played full out is E7 (E G♯ B D) in bar 9. Check out the hip turnaround lick in bar 10 over the IV (D) that leads back down to open position with a fast and difficult two-step bend from C♮ to E in bar 11. Bar 11 is imitated 8va in bar 12, and both versions sneak in a quick ♭5 (E♭), which when added to the five-note pentatonic minor scale makes it "the blues scale," our next subject.




1/4
1/4
1
1
T
A
Б


D5 D6 D7(3) D6 C5 D5 D6 D7(3) D5
1/4
(A7)
1/4
1
1
T
A
Б


8va
E7
loco
hold
(D7)
3
1
1
1
1
1
T
A
Б

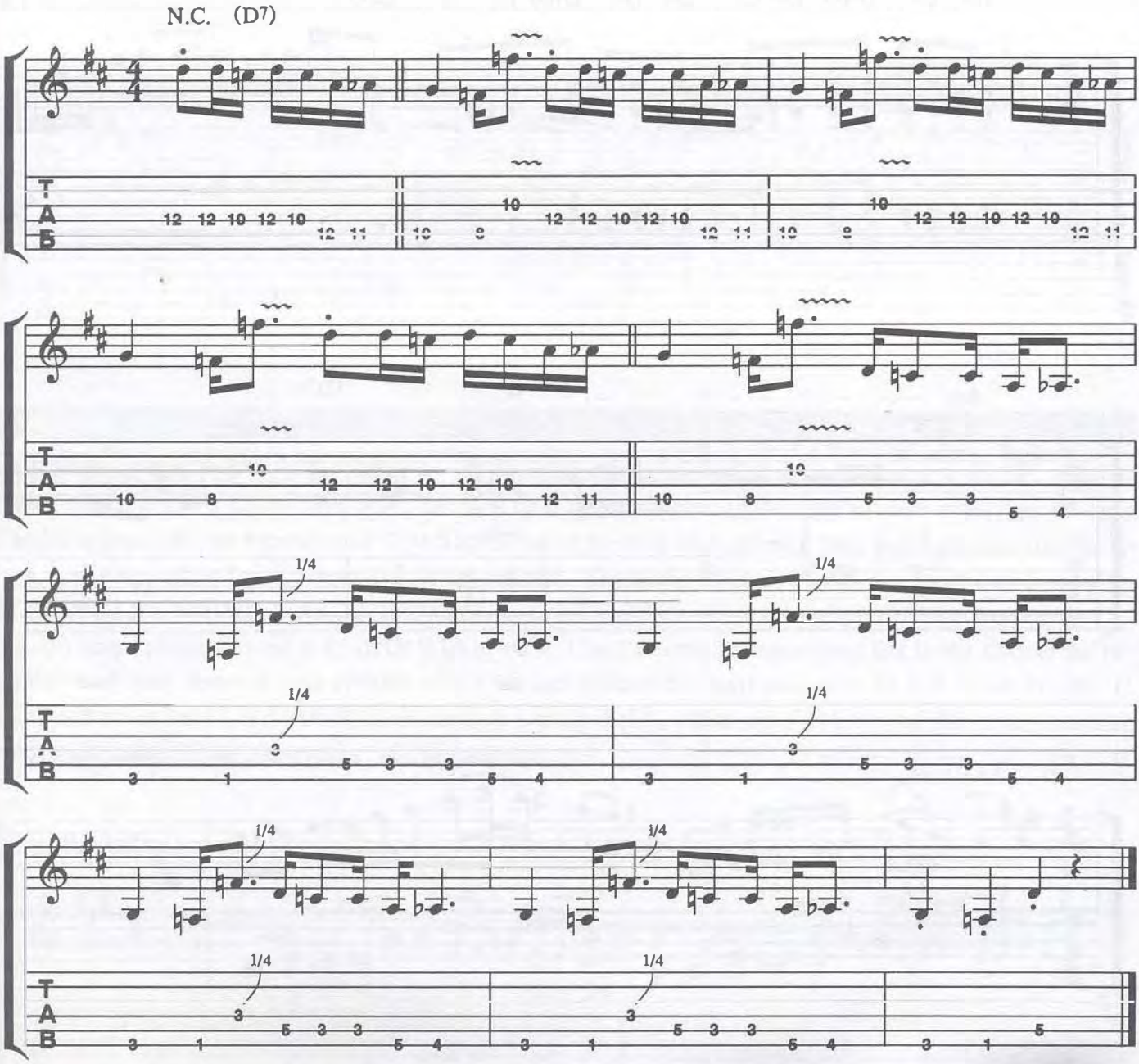

(A7)
2
2
T
A
Б

Blues Scale Riffs

The blues scale adds a sixth note to the pentatonic scale, the ♭5 (or ♯4). Now the scale spells: 1 ♭3 4 ♭5 ♮5 ♭7. The inclusion of this note is a natural occurrence in blues and rock, and can be traced to the vocal inflections of early blues singers. Guitarists tried to find that "in-between-the-note" sound and often approach this "blue" note with bends and slides to imitate the voice.

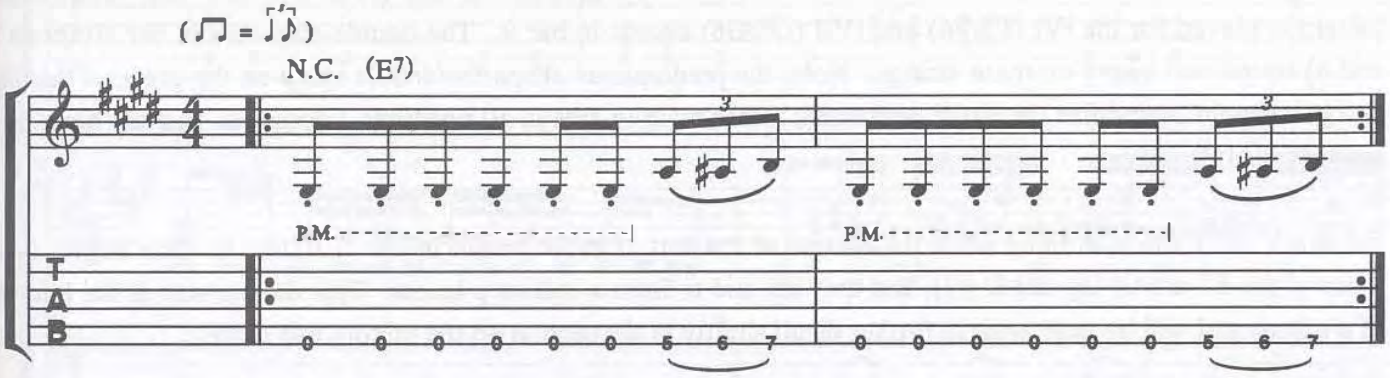
Example 41

This first example of the added ♭5 note is from a Hendrix vamp in D a la his Band of Gypsies days. The first version of this D blues scale (D F G A♭ A♮ C) riff is in 10th position and is played four times. The next version is different rhythmically, putting greater stress on the star of the show: the ♭5 (A♭), in 3rd position.



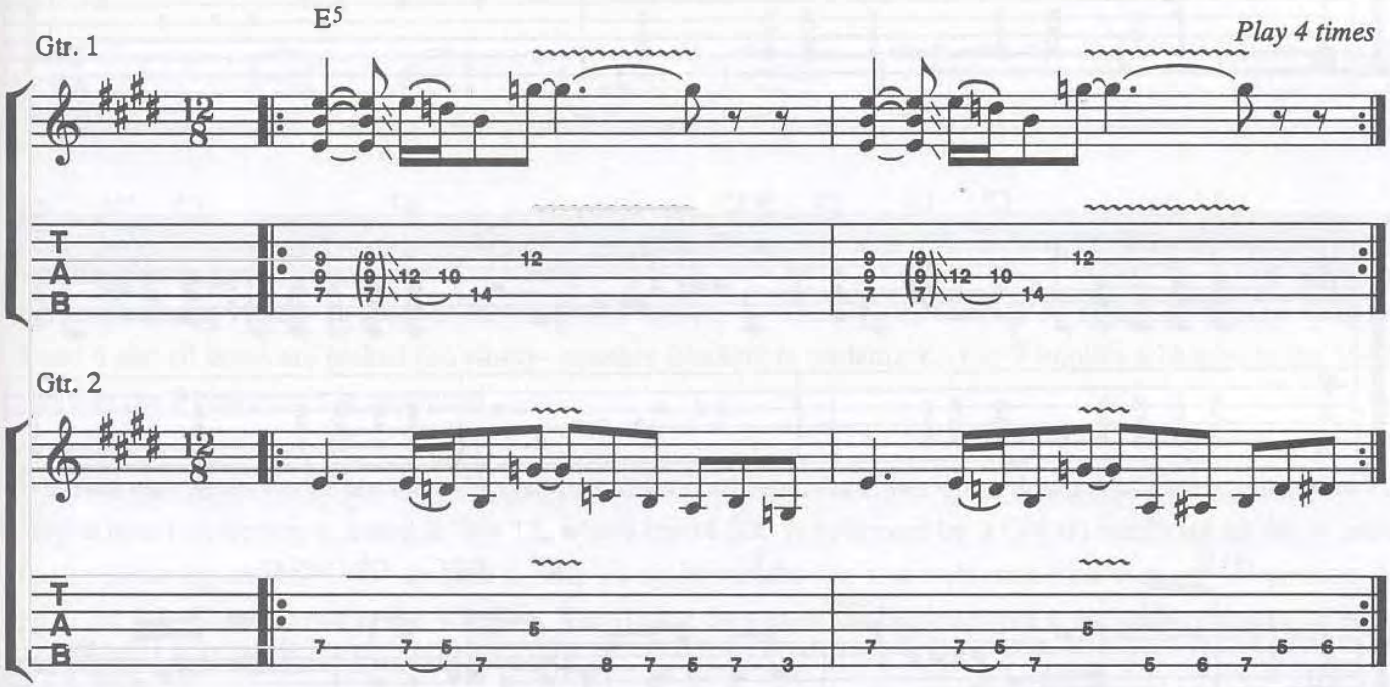
Example 42

Here is another would-be bass line riff adopted by the guitar in a rock shuffle a la Robbie Krieger of the Doors. In the key of E, the E blues scale (E G A A♯ B D) is used partially. Krieger played a Gibson SG without a pick. Note the pick(less) hand muting on the open E string, similar to a bass player's approach. The ♯4 (A♯) is played with a hammer-on, be careful to balance the notes dynamically.



Example 43

This riff in E, a la Martin Barre of Jethro Tull, adds not only the ♯4 (A♯) to E pentatonic minor, but the ♭6 (C♮) and ♭7 (D♯) as well; arriving at a scale that spells: E G A A♯ B C D and D♯. Guitar 2 plays the two-bar riff that is comprised of these notes, while Guitar 1 is a one-bar lick based exclusively on E pentatonic minor.

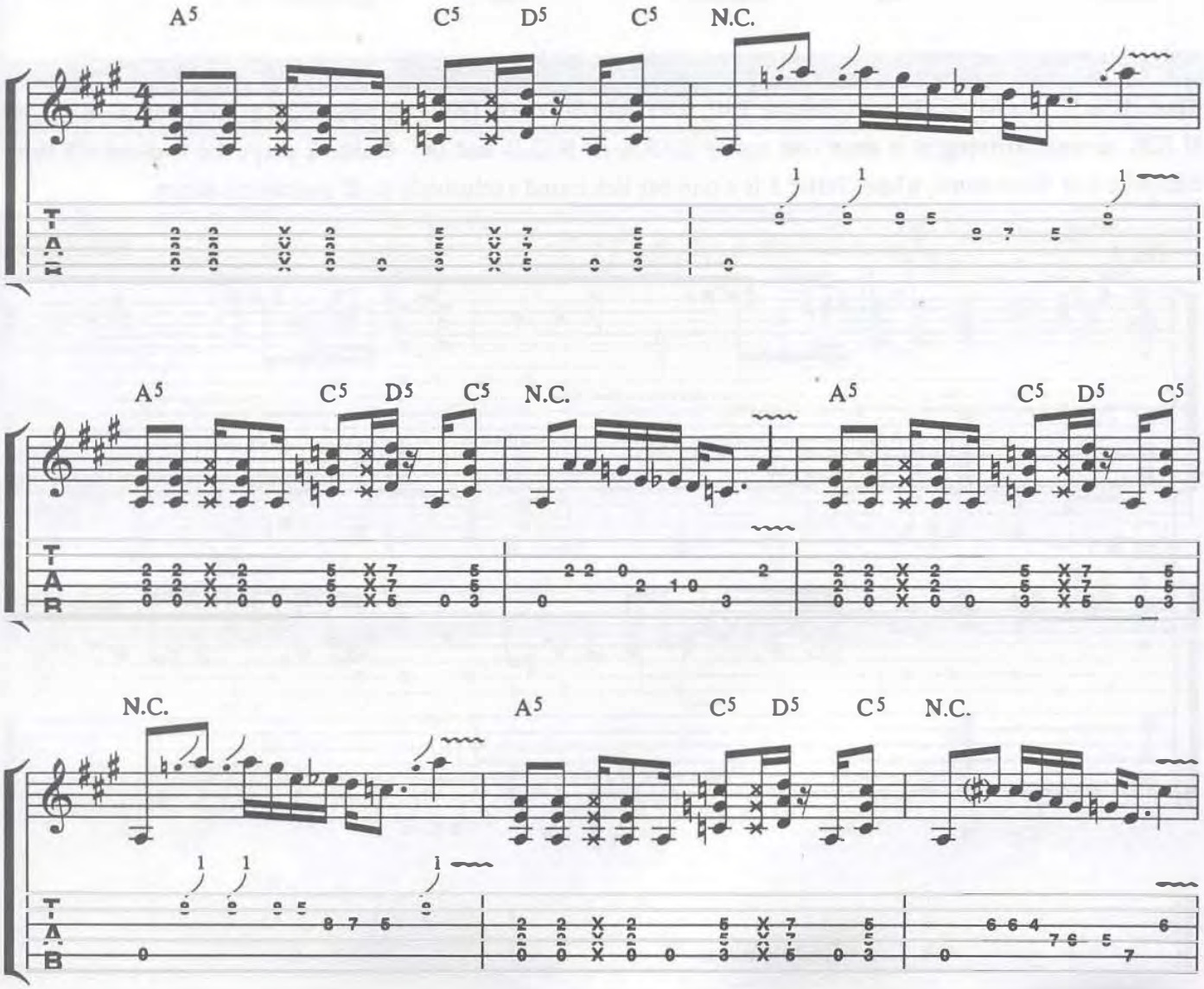


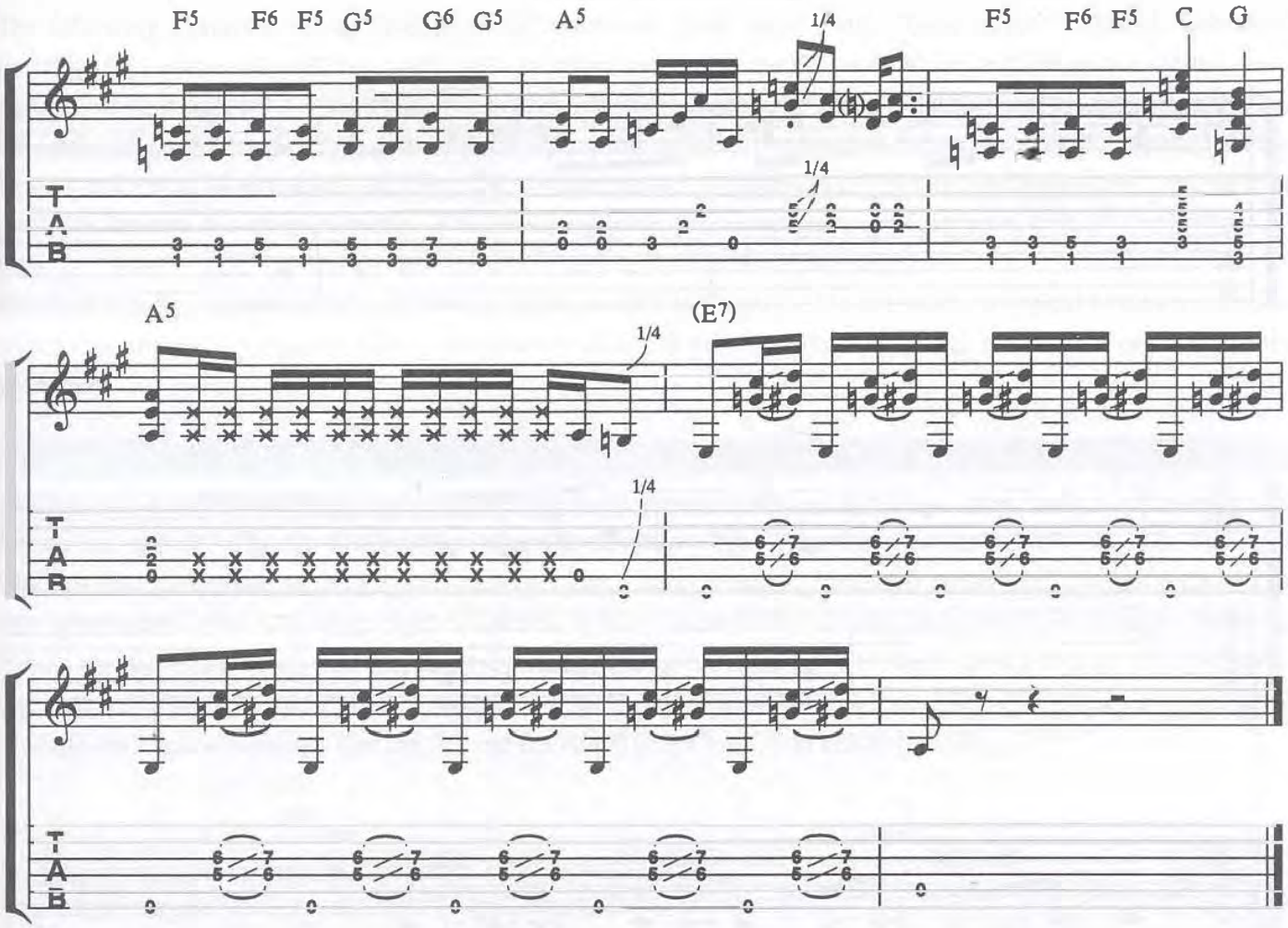
Example 44

This is a blues/rock guitar tour de force in the style of Johnny Winter. In the key of A, this example incorporates three-note power chords on the I, ♭III and IV (A5, C5 and D5) with an A blues scale (A C D E♭ E♮ G) riff in 5th position (bar 2) and open position (bar 4), all within the first four bars.

In bar 8, a variation of the blues scale riff is harmonized using A mixolydian (A B C♯ D E F♯ G). The boogie pattern is played for the ♭VI (F5/F6) and ♭VII (G5/G6) chords in bar 9. The double-stop 4ths in bar 10 (beats 3 and 4) sound real heavy on these strings. Note: the predominant shape for double-stops on the guitar is the 4th, and you should harmonize the entire pentatonic minor scale in 4ths in all positions, because as you can hear, they are very useful.

For the V (E7) chord, Johnny often makes use of the sort of move found in bars 12 and 14. The target chord tones of the E7 are G♯ (3) and D (♭7), and they are slid to from a half-step below. This double-stop is the interval of a tritone and will be dealt with in further detail shortly in the section on the mixolydian scale.

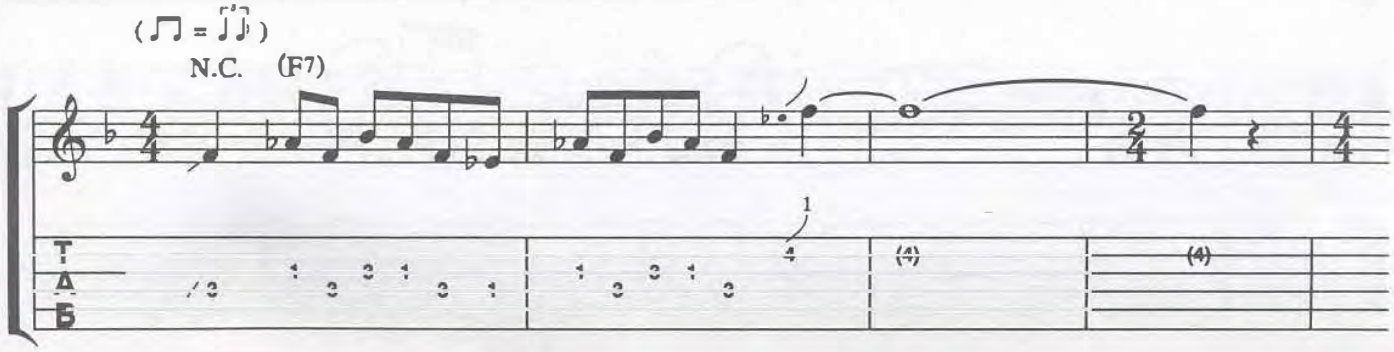


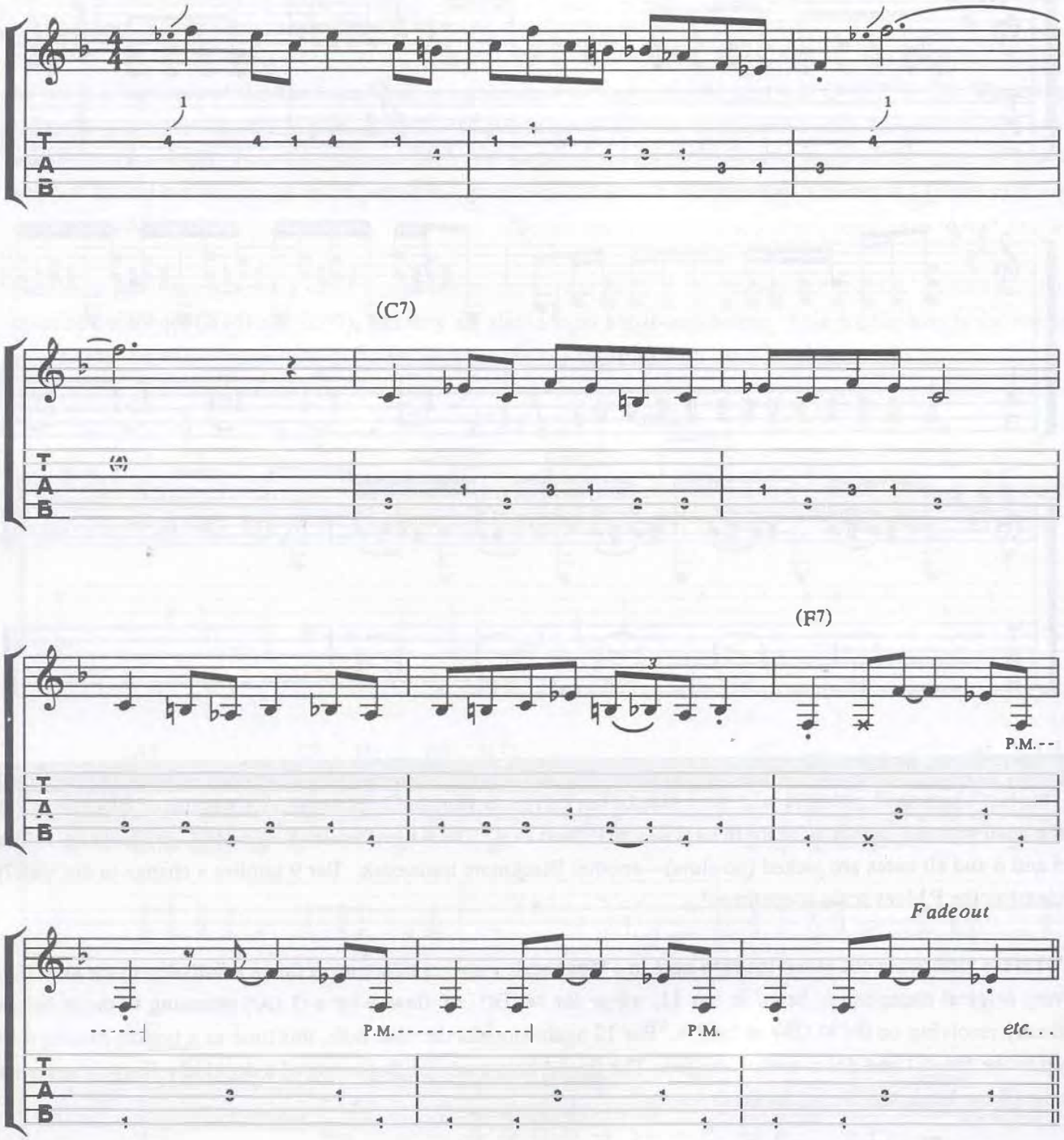


Example 45

This last blues scale example is in the unlikely key of F, a la Ritchie Blackmore. A signature of Blackmore's is the bend without vibrato as heard in bars 2-7, w/E♭ bent to F. The F blues scale (F A♭ B♭ B♮ C E♭) crops up in bars 5 and 6 and all notes are picked (no slurs)--another Blackmore trademark. Bar 9 implies a change to the V (C7) chord as the F blues scale is continued.

Whereas nine times out of ten the ♯4/♭5 note in a blues scale resolves either up or down a half-step to the ♮4 or ♮5, a very original exception is heard in bar 11, where the ♯4 (B♮) is followed by a ♭3 (A♭) returning to the ♯4 before finally resolving on the ♮4 (B♭) on beat 4. Bar 12 again stresses the blue note, this time as a typical passing tone up to the 5th (C) and down to the 4th (B♭). The final 4 bars mark the beginning of a decidedly English treatment of a 12-bar blues shuffle before the fade out.




(C7)
(F7)
P.M.
P.M.
P.M.
Fadeout
etc. . .

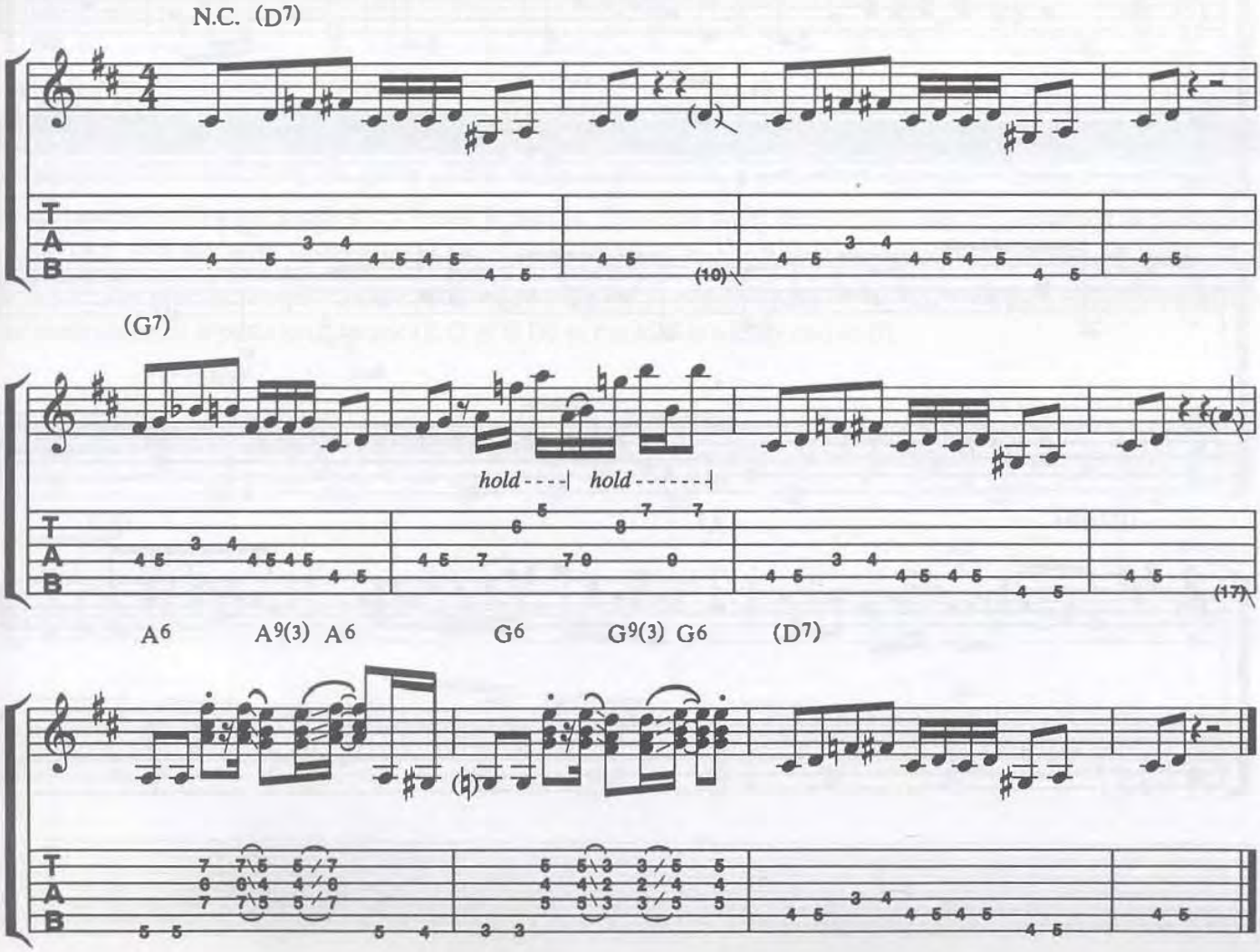
Riff/Chord Combos

The following examples are as diverse as the blues/rock guitar style itself. Their common thread is the dual functions they serve—furnishing a tune with an inventive "guitar hook," while also functioning as a rhythm part. The chords found in this section range from large, active voicings to two-note double-stops used for punctuation. The musical environments these riff/chord combos are culled from range in style from Eric Clapton and the Beatles to Lynyrd Skynyrd and ZZ Top. To whatever extent the guitar parts join the rhythm section or stray "out front," in the end, it's all good music.

The dual function is personified perfectly in Example 23 a la Clapton. It's not unlike a typical Motown situation where two or even three guitar players play totally different parts while the sum total sounds like one impossible guitar part.

Example 46

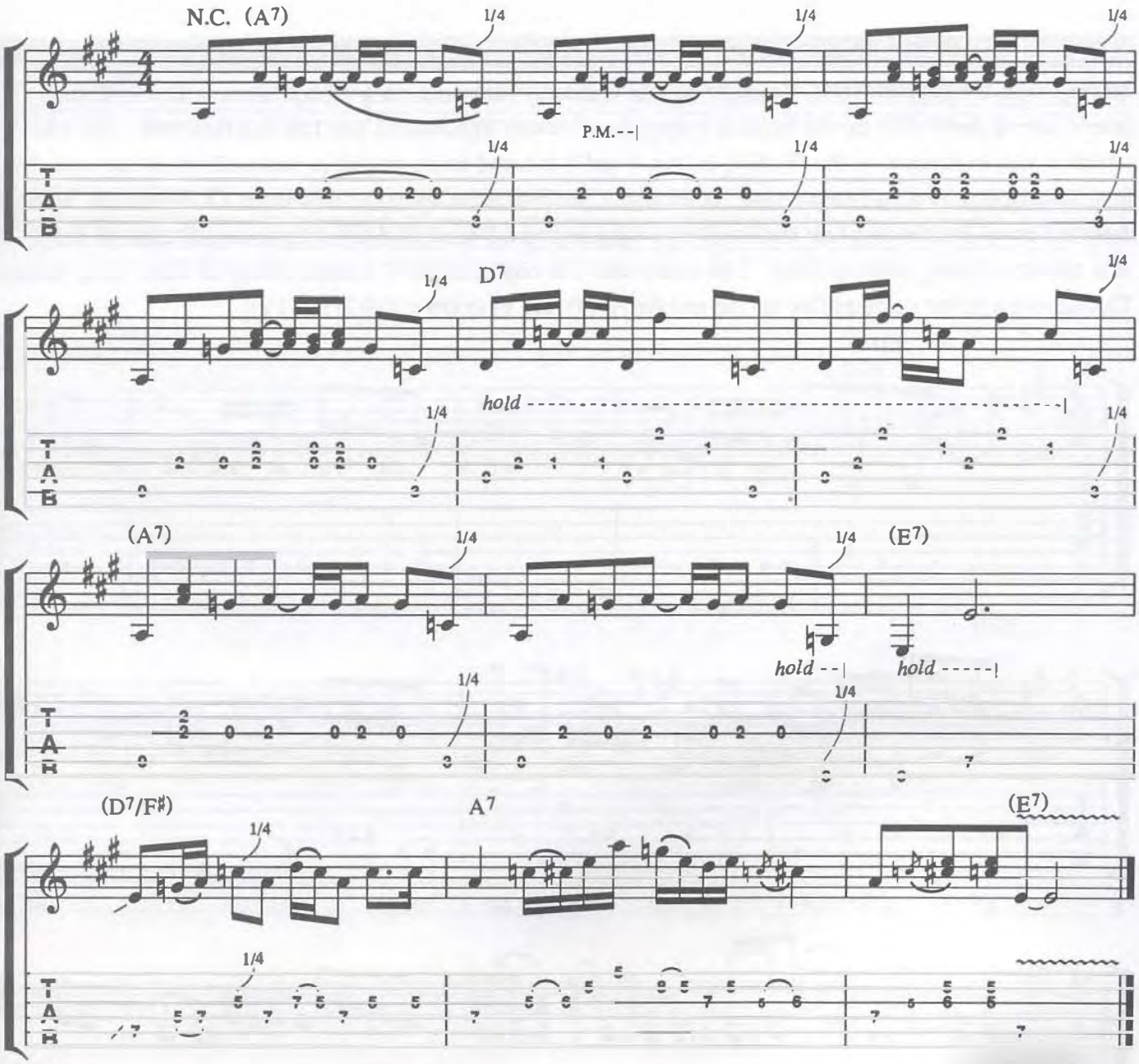
Staying with the Clapton style, we come to this decidedly rock take on a 12-bar blues in D a la Cream. The brazen use of the ♭7 (C♮) for the implied I chord is obviously lighthearted and rare in blues/rock. The main riff which is also transposed to the IV (G7) in bars 5 and 6 is based on no particular scale, rather, it has each chord-tone approached by a half-step below: D, F♯ and A are proceeded by non-chord tones C♯, F♮ and G♯. In bar 6, there's a novel double-stop lick that involves a superimposed F triad (F A C) slide up to a G triad (G B D)—the true essence of rock meeting blues. The turnaround that begins in bar 9 is more fitting of blues using common Chicago-style guitar voicings like the A6 and the A9(3) (for V) to G6 to G9(3) (for IV).



Example 47

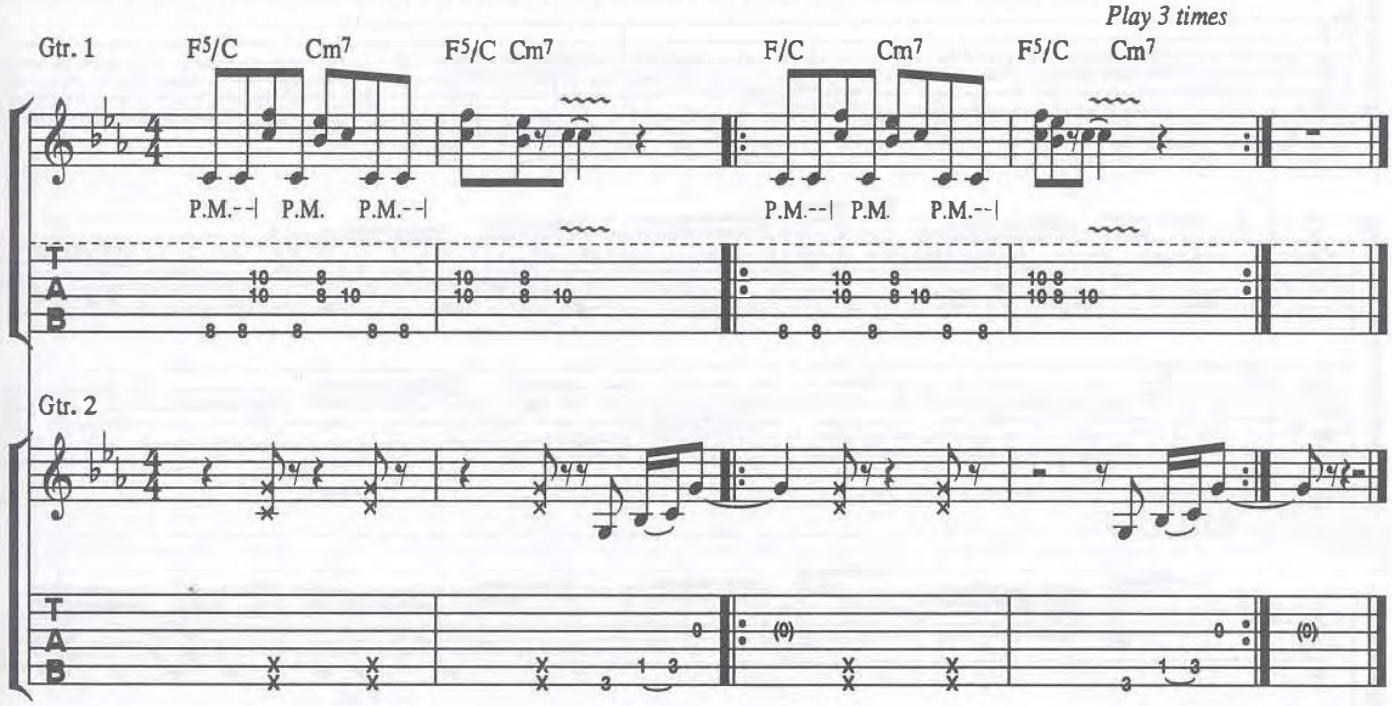
This one is a rock take on the standard of blues standards via Eric Clapton by his hero, Robert Johnson. The signature riff (in A) is carved out of A pentatonic minor (A C D E G) in bars 1 and 2. Bars 3 and 4 harmonize the riff with double-stop 3rds borrowed from A pentatonic major (A B C♯ E F♯). The change to D7 (IV) in bar 5 brings to mind the Delta-style origins of the song by picking the notes of a basic open D7 chord (although it would have taken hundreds of Delta acoustic guitars to match the volume Eric used to play at).

Study the lick played over the turnaround (bars 10-12), this is classic high-powered Clapton blues. Note the strength of the C♮ (bar 10, the ♭7 of the D7/F♯ chord) resolving to C♯, being the major 3rd of the A7 chord in the next bar.



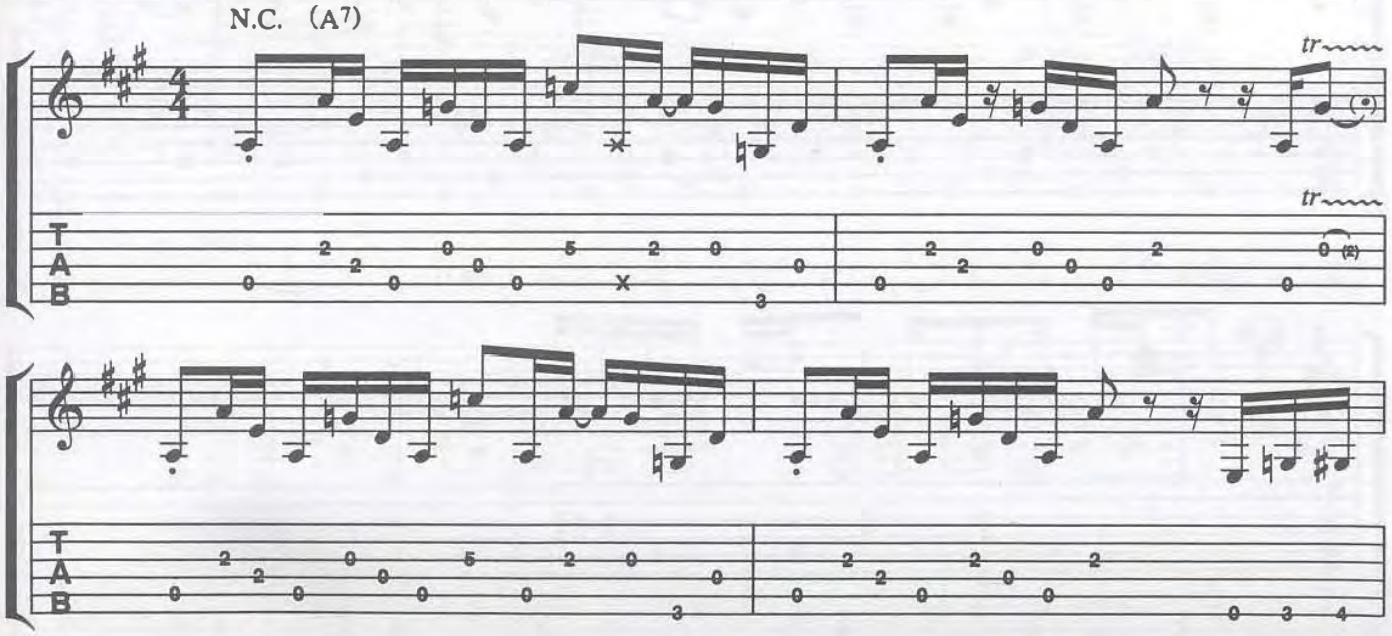
Example 48

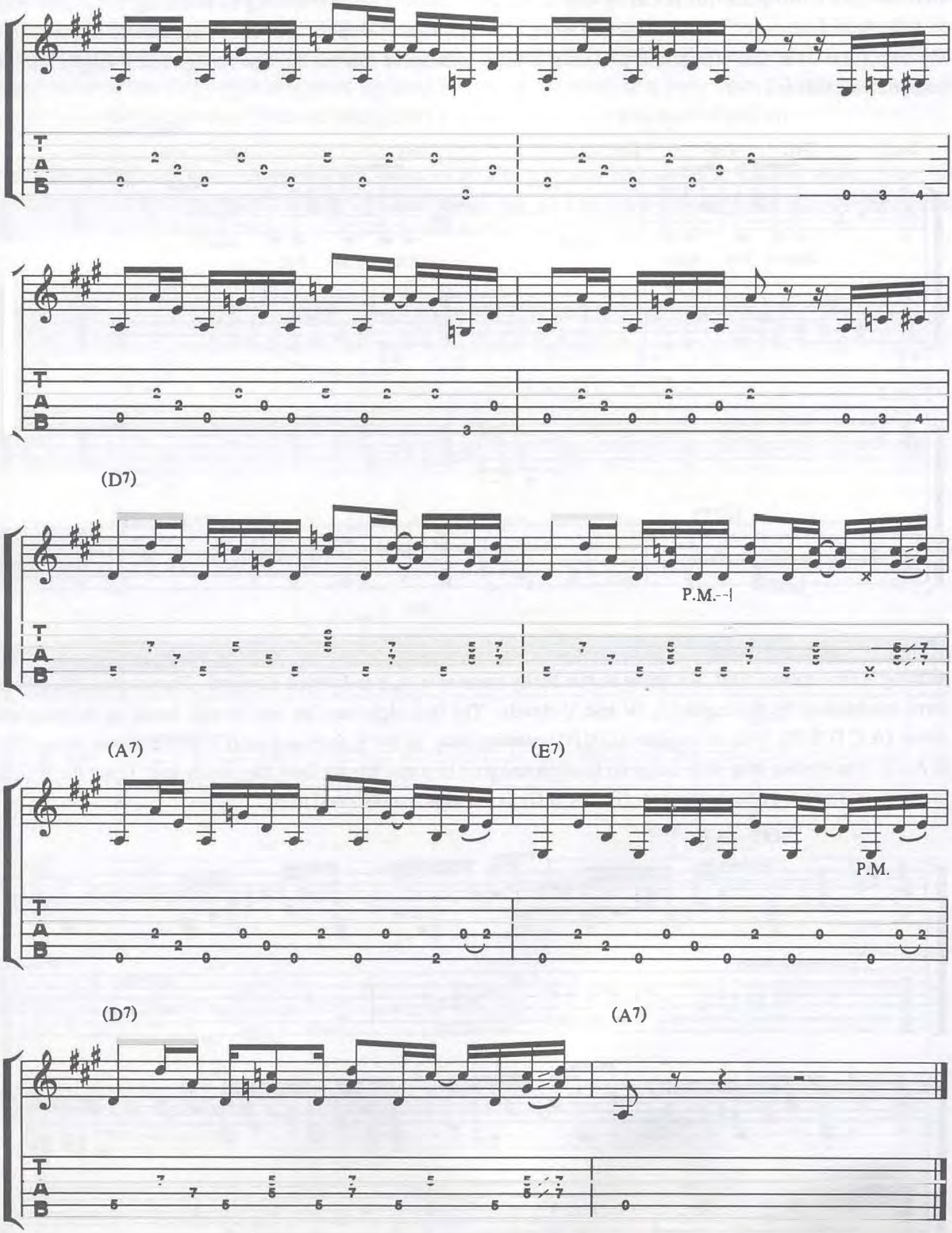
Here we have a two-guitar riff in Cm by way of ZZ Top. Guitar 1 keeps it moving by bouncing two double-stops in 4ths over a low muted C note on the 6th string. The first double-stop (beat 2) can be considered an F5/C while the next (beat 3) is Cm7 (B♭ and E♭). Guitar 2 plays percussive hits on the low strings and a simple riff that compliments Guitar 1.



Example 49

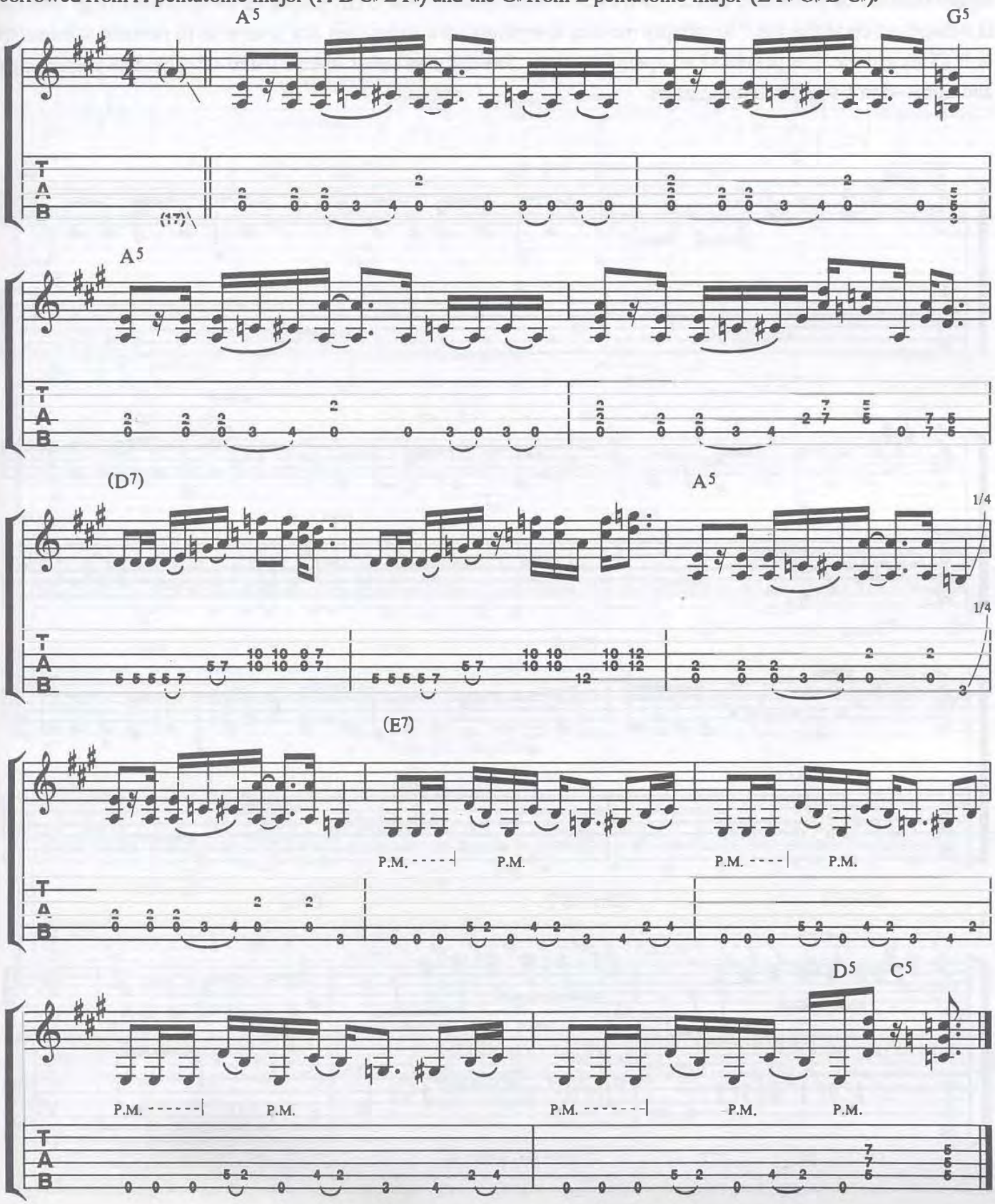
Moving a little further East, we arrive at this funky number in A, a la Lynyrd Skynyrd. This is a modified blues form, established by the implied I, IV and V chords. The first eight bars lay out the riff, based on A pentatonic minor (A C D E G), with an occasional G♯ (♮7) passing tone. In bar 9, there is a shift to D pentatonic minor (D F G A C). The double stop 4ths fatten up the line and tend to sound bigger than they really are. Upon the V (E7), the scale shifts to E pentatonic minor (E G A B D) as the idea is transposed to fit.




(D7)
P.M.
(A7)
(E7)
P.M.
(D7)
(A7)

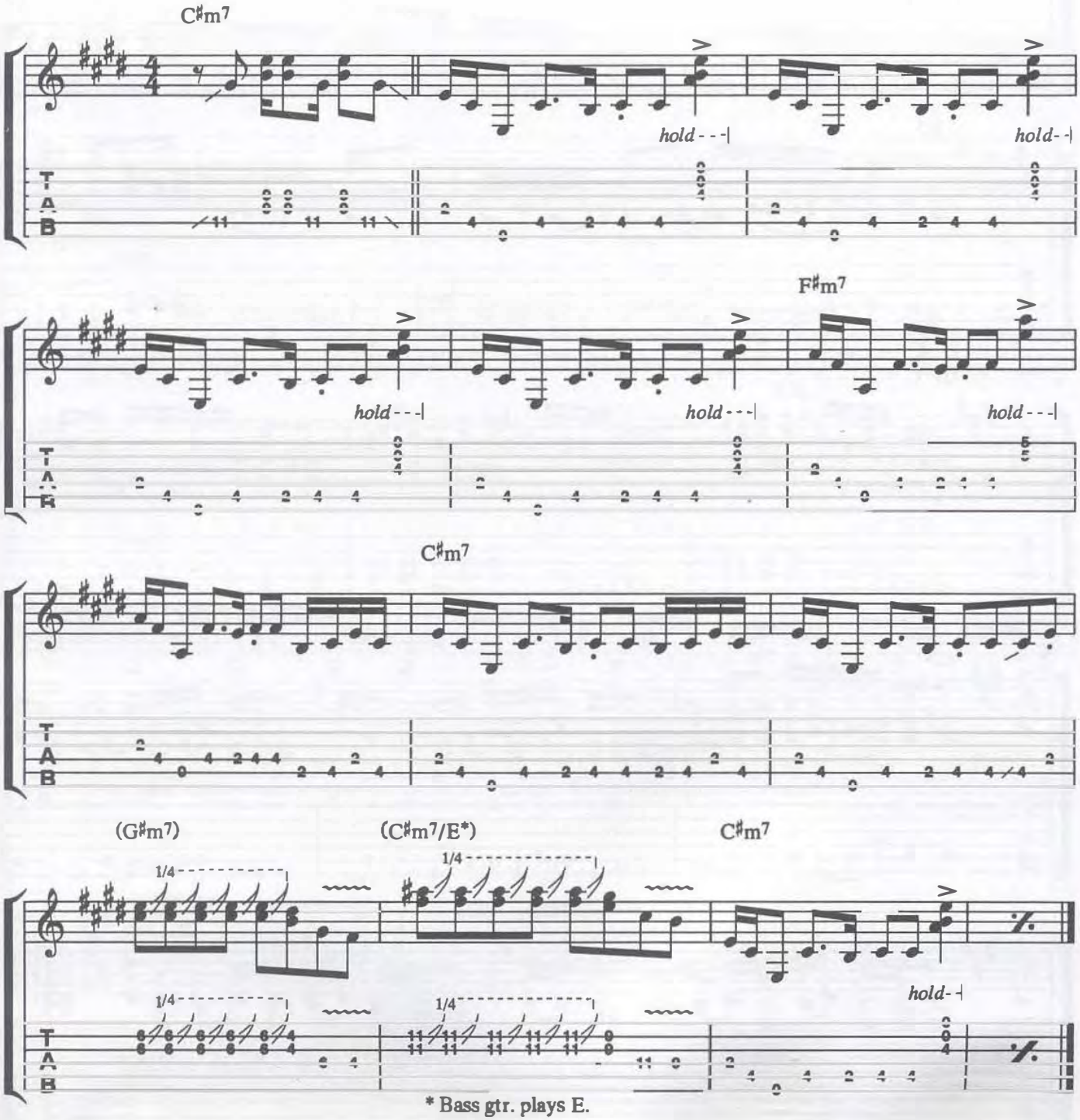
Example 50

This Skynyrd riff picks up where Example 49 left off. Also in A, this riff takes the double-stop 4ths a few steps further, setting up the chord changes with some cool connections on beats 3 and 4 of bars 4, 5 and 6. Although the elements of the riffs for the I, IV and V chords are based on A, D and E pentatonic minor respectively, what lightens up the sound are the major 3rds played on the A5 (C♯, bars 1-4) and the E7 (G♯, bars 9-12). The C♯ is borrowed from A pentatonic major (A B C♯ E F♯) and the G♯ from E pentatonic major (E F♯ G♯ B C♯).



Example 51

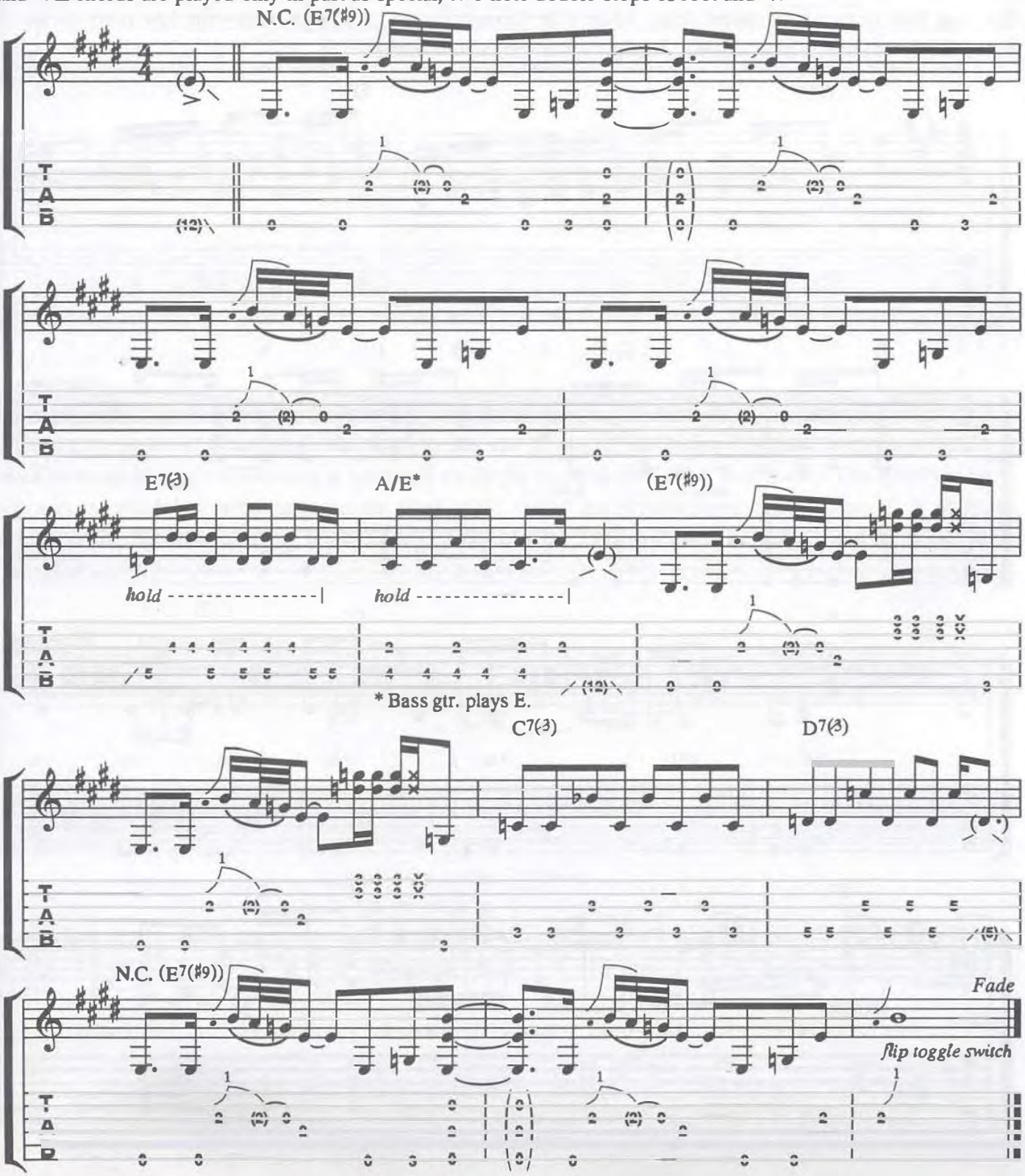
Hendrix was famous for his constant use of the dominant 7(♯9) sound (the Purple Haze chord) in vague tonal situations that as in blues, have major (dominant) and minor played simultaneously. This example, however, is a clear-cut case of a minor key (C♯ minor). There are no dominant implications in this heavy-psychedelic-12-bar blues, so the double-stops for C♯m7 and F♯m7 are intended as minor chords for a change! You don't get much hipper than the C♯ pentatonic minor (C♯ E F♯ G♯ B) lick in bar 1 with ♭3 (E) played as an open 6th string. The lick is transposed up to the F♯m7 by simply moving everything up a string: the lick is now in F♯ pentatonic minor (F♯ A B C♯ E) and the ♭3 is played as an open 5th string. The 1/4 tone bends in bars 9 and 10 should be played slight and tight—don't over bend those notes.



* Bass gtr. plays E.

Example 52

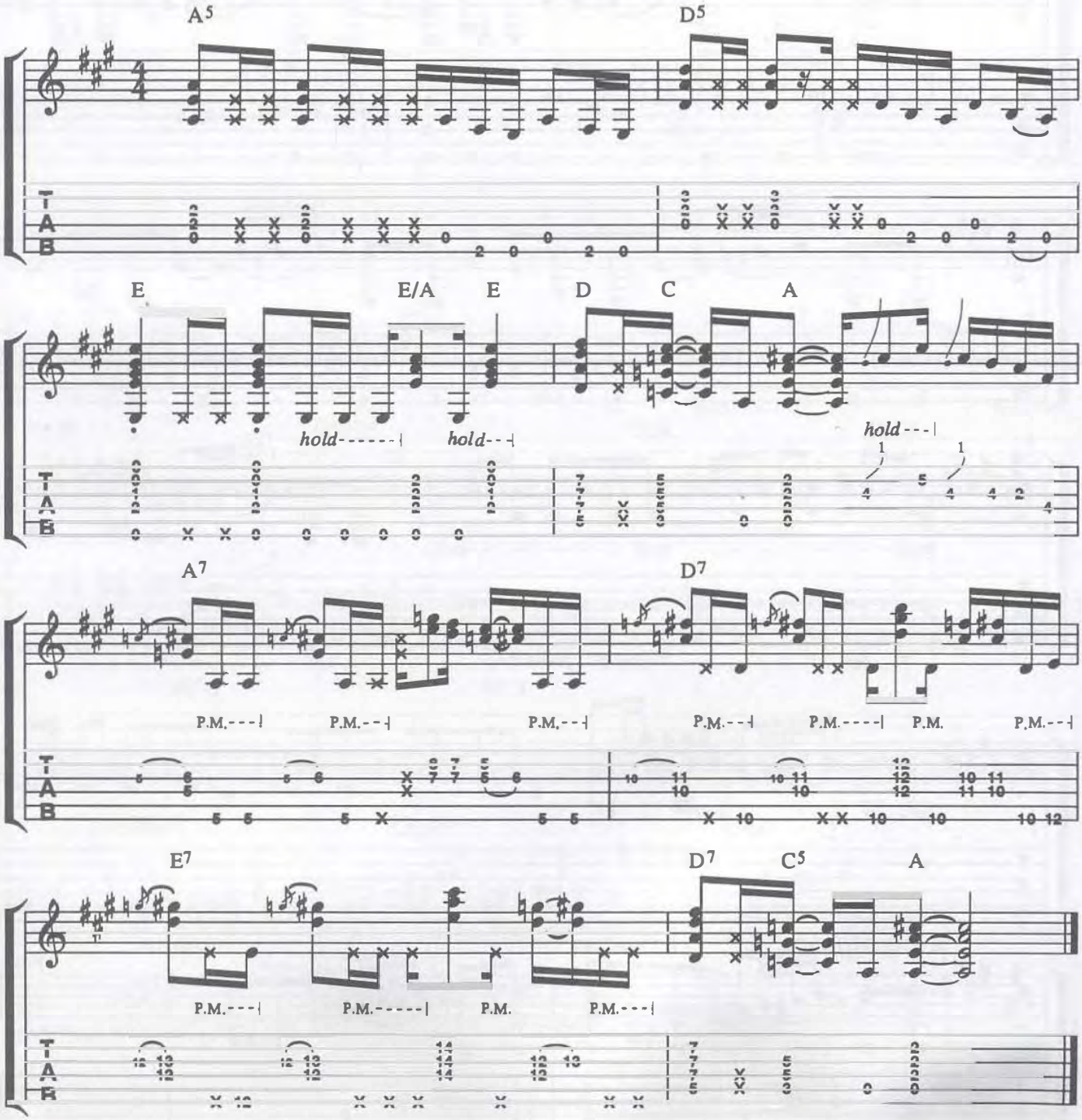
Here is another child of Jimi's, one he loosely adopted from bluesman Muddy Waters. The main difference between the two approaches is that Hendrix played it thousands of times louder, with the accent on a crushing heaviness. An ominous sounding E pentatonic minor (E G A B D) in open position is at the center of it all. The tonal feeling is of E7(♯9), especially in bars 7 and 8. E7(3) (D and B) and A (C♯ and A) are paired down to double-stops and played over an E bass pedal in bars 6 and 7. Bars 9 and 10 do something Muddy probably never did: use ♭VI (C7(3)) and ♭VII (D7(3)) in the chord progression—a staple of blues/rock. Note that the ♭VI and ♭VII chords are played only in part as special, two-note double-stops of root and ♭7.



Example 53

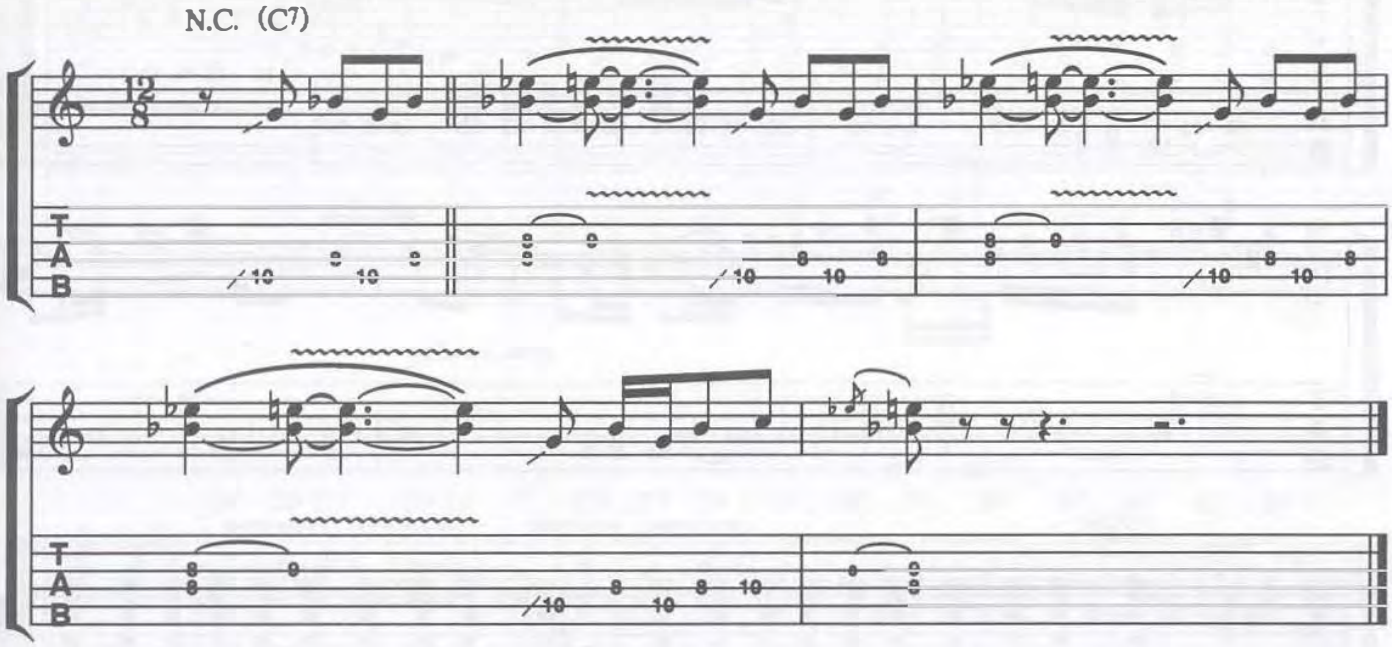
Now another heavy-rocking guitar part in A a la Johnny Winter. This one uses small (double-stop tritones), medium (power 5ths, A5 and D5) and large (full open E) chords as well as a couple of riffs to get that busy, yet solid sound.

Bars 1 and 2 show an A pentatonic major (A B C♯ E F♯) lick that connects the A5 and D5 chords. Note the ♭III (C) chord connecting D and A in bar 4. Tritone double-stops for I, IV and V are found in bars 5, 6 and 7. As in all other occurrences of the tritone, the key chord tones that define A7, D7 and E7 are the 3rd and ♭7th of each. Try your best to avoid unwanted string noise after hammering to the double-stops—the low roots on the 6th string can be difficult to play cleanly. Using your thumb is your best bet.



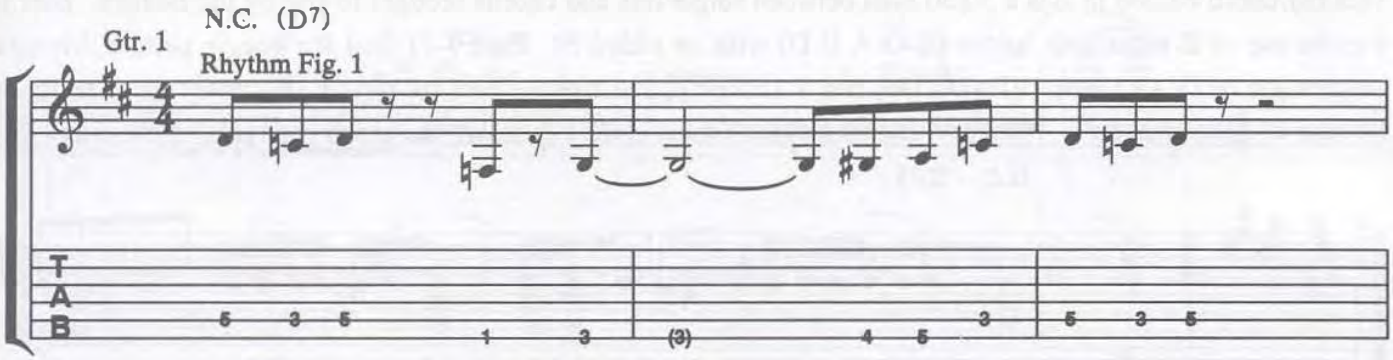
Example 54

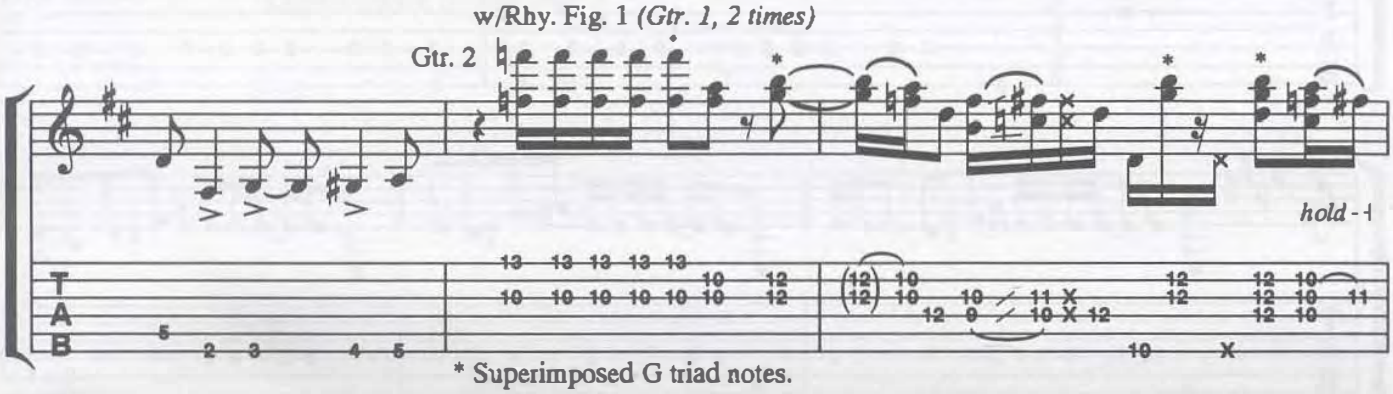
Here is a short one in the style of Cream. In the key of C, this slow riff is yet another example of how blues/rock combines both major and minor thirds to form a sound that is unique to blues derived music.



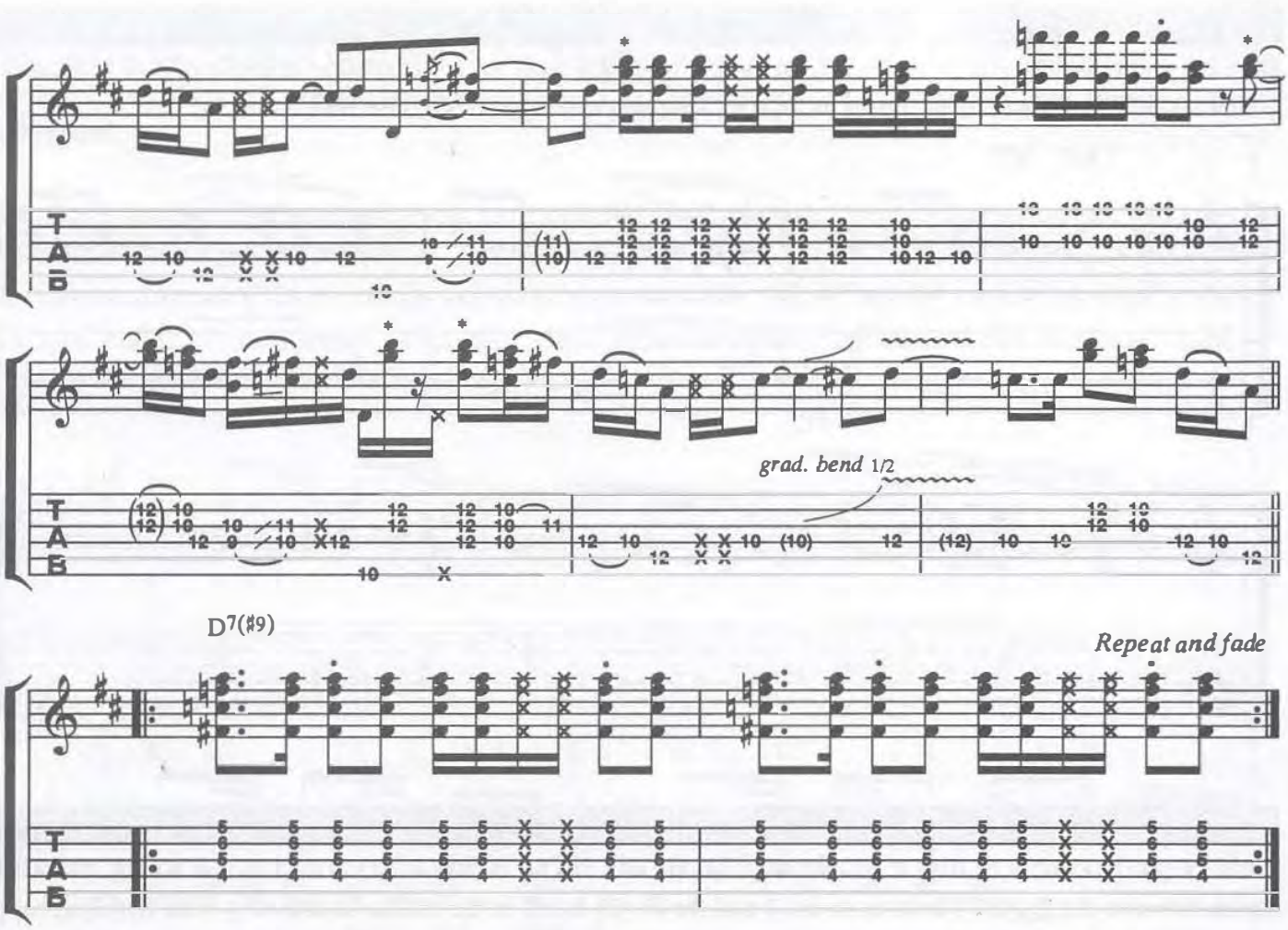
Example 55

Another good example of tritone double-stops is this one in D a la Stevie Ray Vaughan. A strong contrast is struck between the F♮ (♭3/♯9) octaves in bar 5 and the F♯ (♮3) found in the tritone double-stop with C♮ (♭7) in bar 6. Although the whole riff is falling under the label "N.C. (D7)," the superimposed G triad notes (G B D) play a very important role in suspending the F♯ up to G momentarily. The single note licks are based on D pentatonic minor (D F G A C).



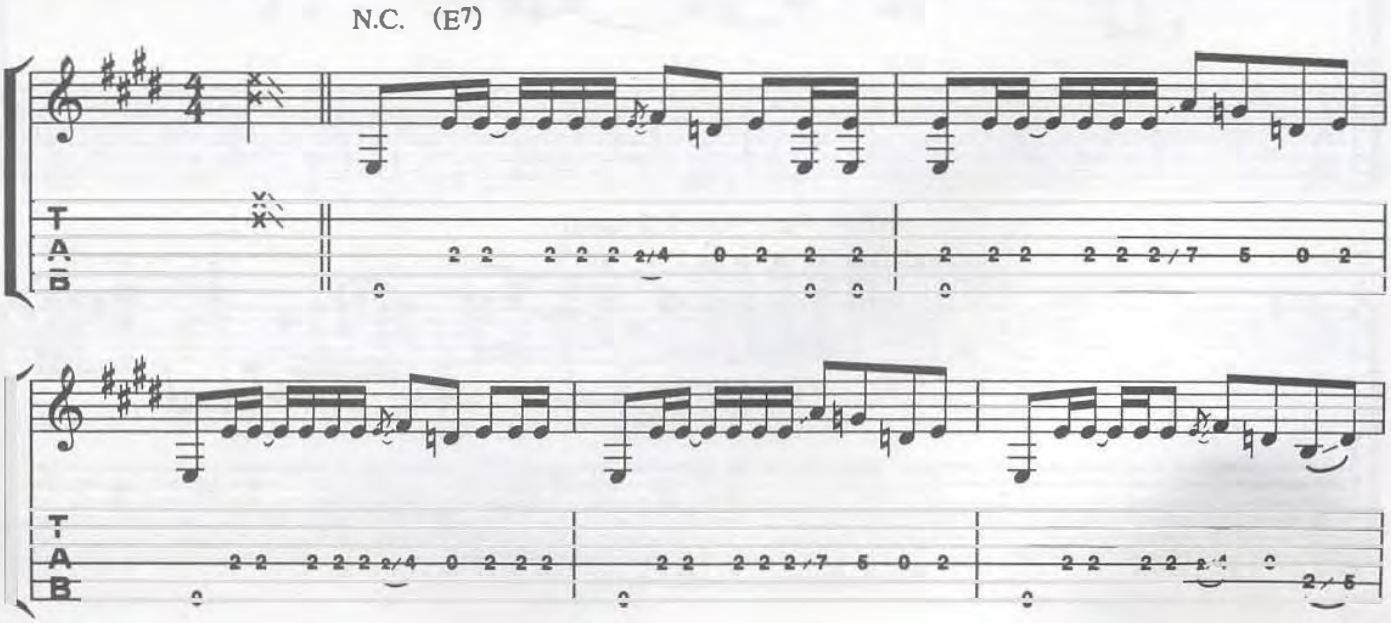


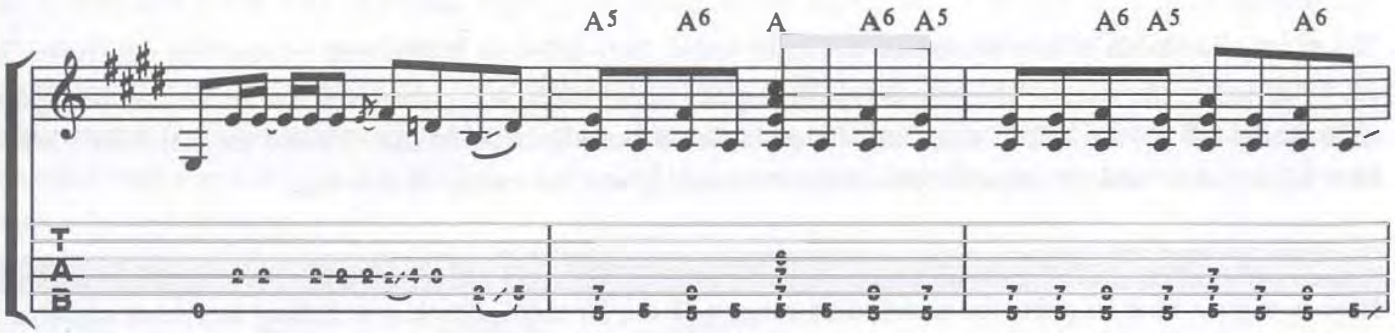
* Superimposed G triad notes.

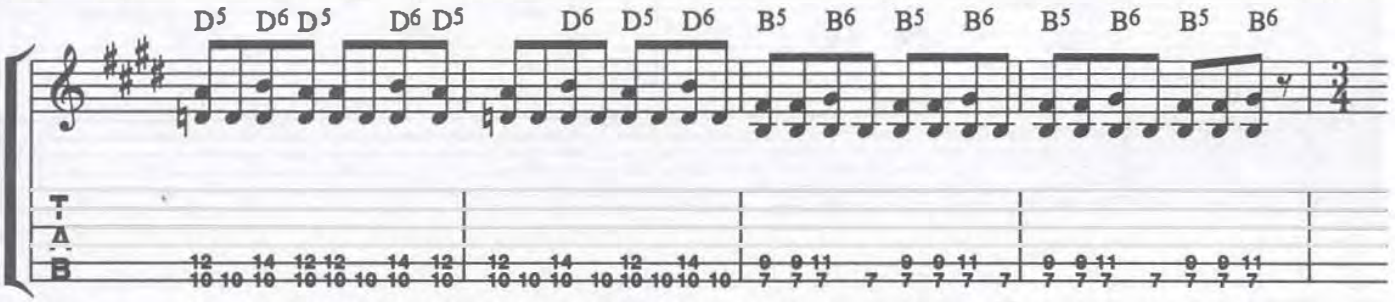


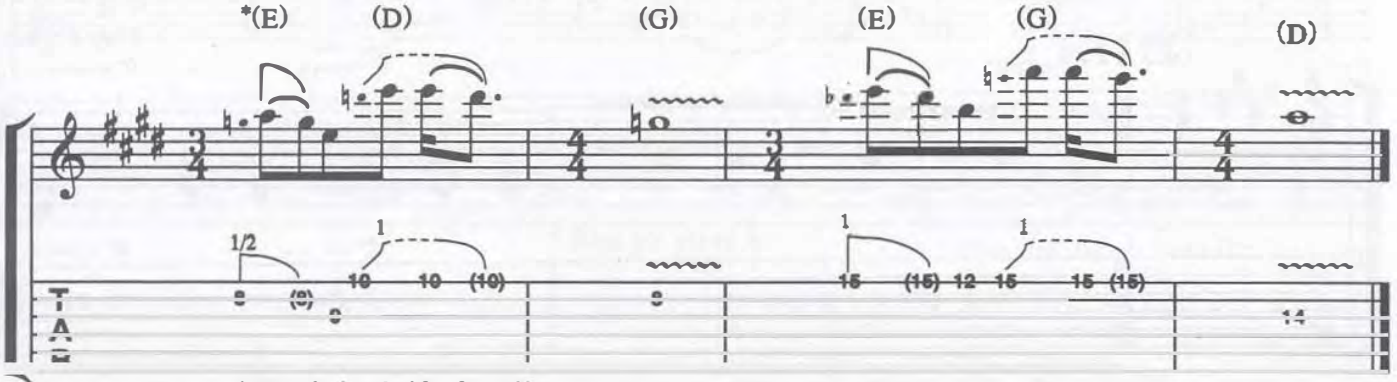
Example 56

This riff/chord combo in E is a 50/50 split between single line and chords brought to you by the Beatles. Bars 1-6 make use of E pentatonic minor (E G A B D) with an added F♯. Bars 7-11 find the boogie pattern driving a progression of IV (A5/A6), ♭VII (D5/D6) and V (B5/B6). The closing bars are typical off-center meter shifts—a favorite of John Lennon's. Note how the single line here is crafted to match the chord changes.









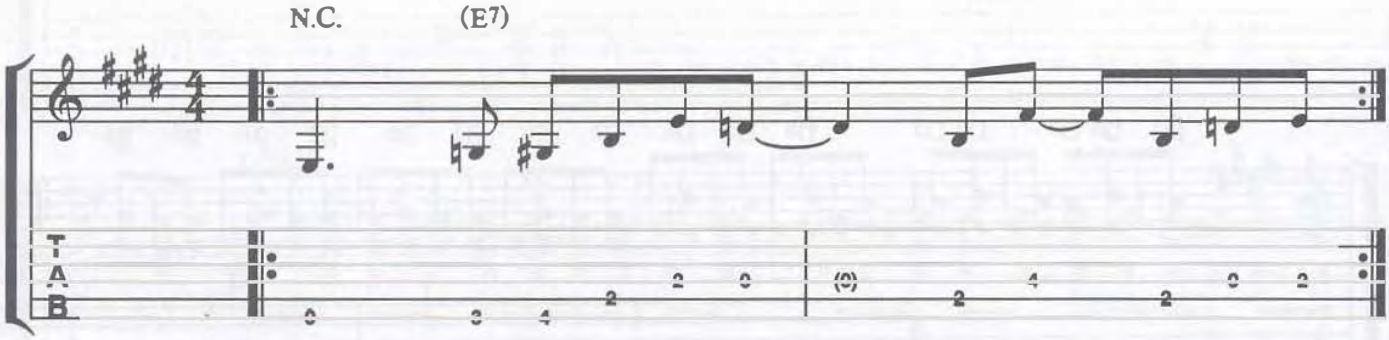
*Chords impled by bass line

Double-Stops/Riffs Based On The Mixolydian Mode

The mixolydian mode is very much like the major scale. Only one note is different, but that one note makes all the difference in the world. The note is the 7th degree. Major scales are spelled: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7. The mixolydian scale spells: 1 2 3 4 5 6 ♭7. Of chief importance is the relationship between that ♭7th and the major 3rd. We've been talking about and playing examples of this relationship with the tritone double-stop.

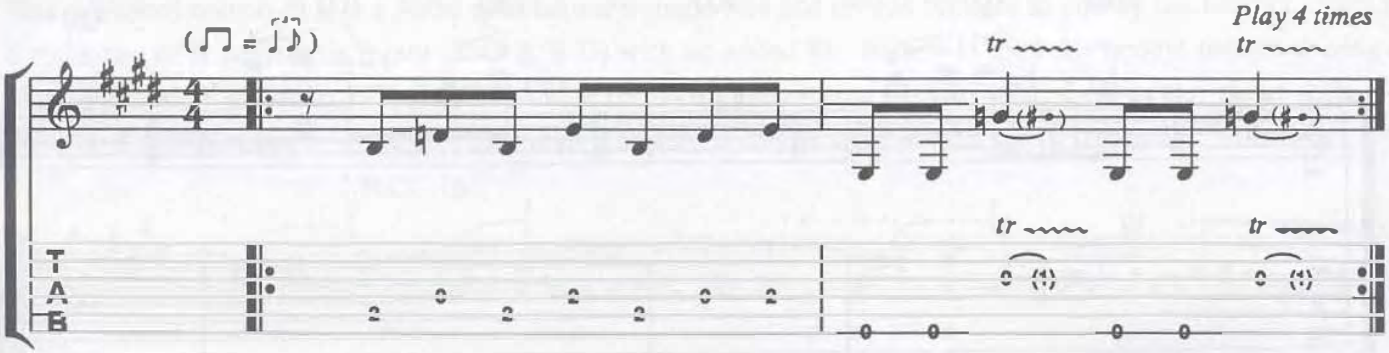
Example 57

Here is a great case in point for mixolydian usage a la the Beatles. The key is E, and the notes are from E mixolydian (E F♯ G♯ A B C♯ D), except for the added G♮ (♭3) which helps emphasize the major 3rd (G♯). This one speaks for itself.



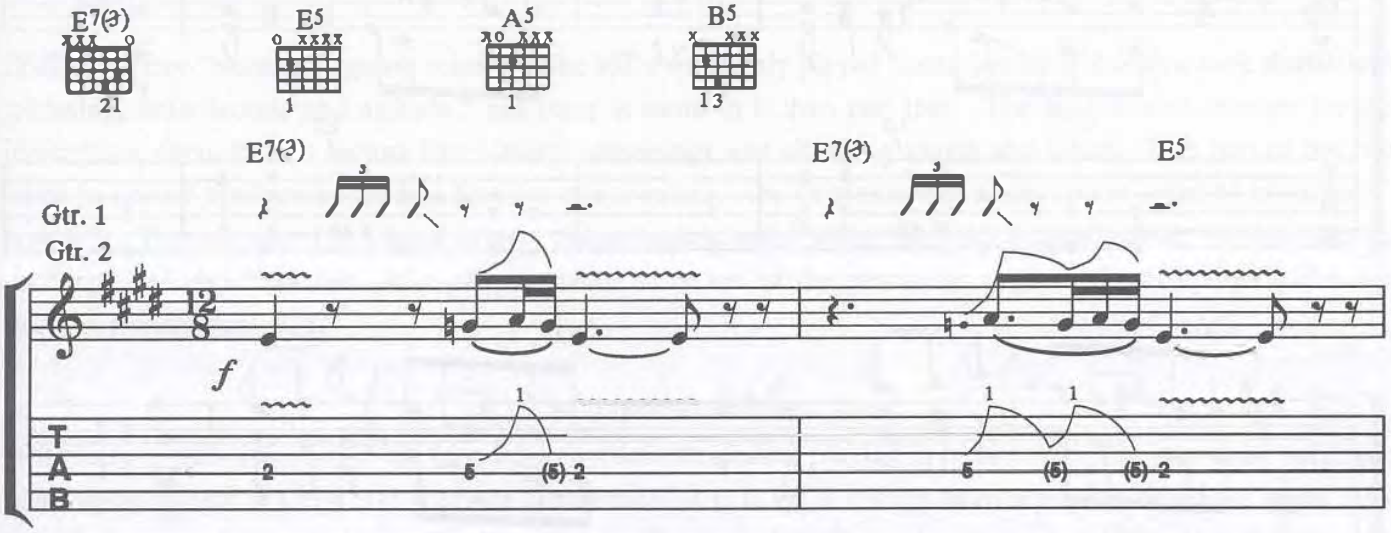
Example 58

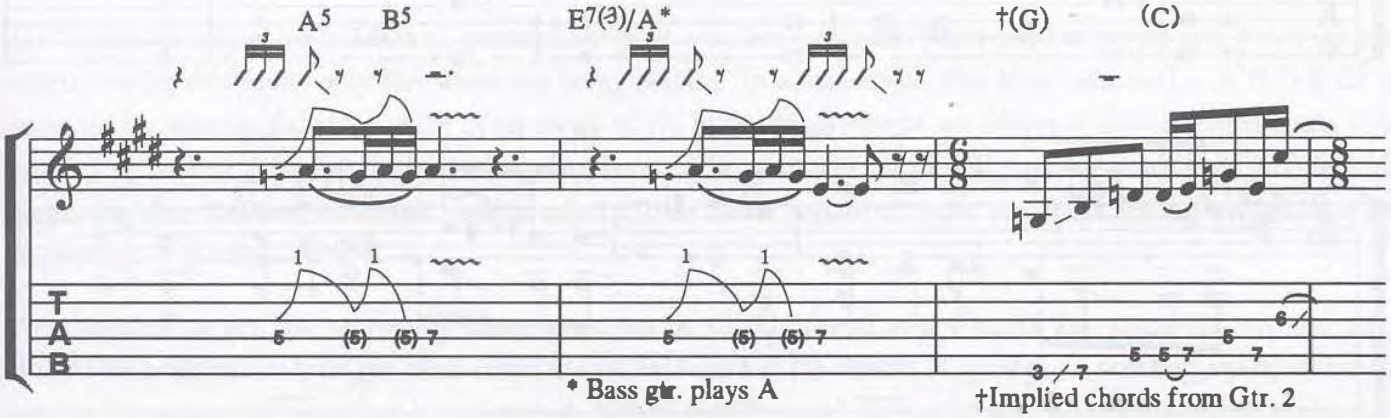
Robbie Krieger of the Doors is credited with this popular shuffle-feel riff in E, using E mixolydian (E F♯ G A B C♯ D). The G♯ (the 3rd) is the key note in the riff despite that it's trilled to from the G♮ (♭3rd). Otherwise, F♯ and C♯ are the only notes missing from the E mixolydian scale.



Example 59

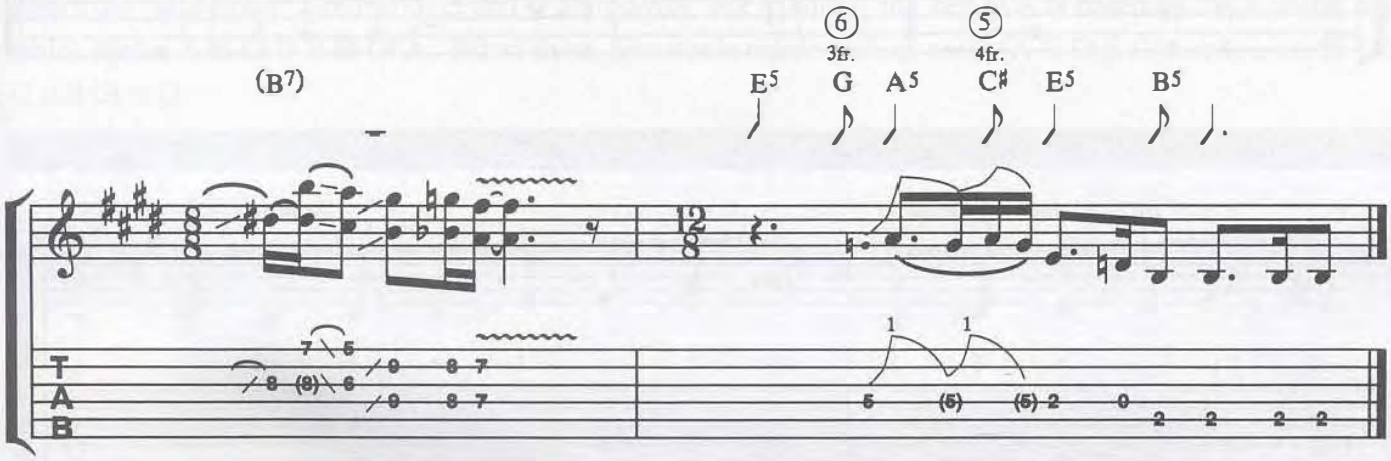
Part II will now close with two final Mixo-Lennon/McCartney examples. This one in E is an unmitigated Lennon blues. The bending business in bars 1-4 is based on E pentatonic minor (E G A B D) and is best accomplished with the 4th finger on the G♮ (5th fret) and the 1st finger on E (2nd fret). The 6/8 bar implies the chord change G to C—played with single notes. The next bar (8/8) is the hot spot, where the B7 chord is expressed with a cool double-stop 6th lick. A standard blues turnaround ends the phrase, returning to single note bends as in the beginning.





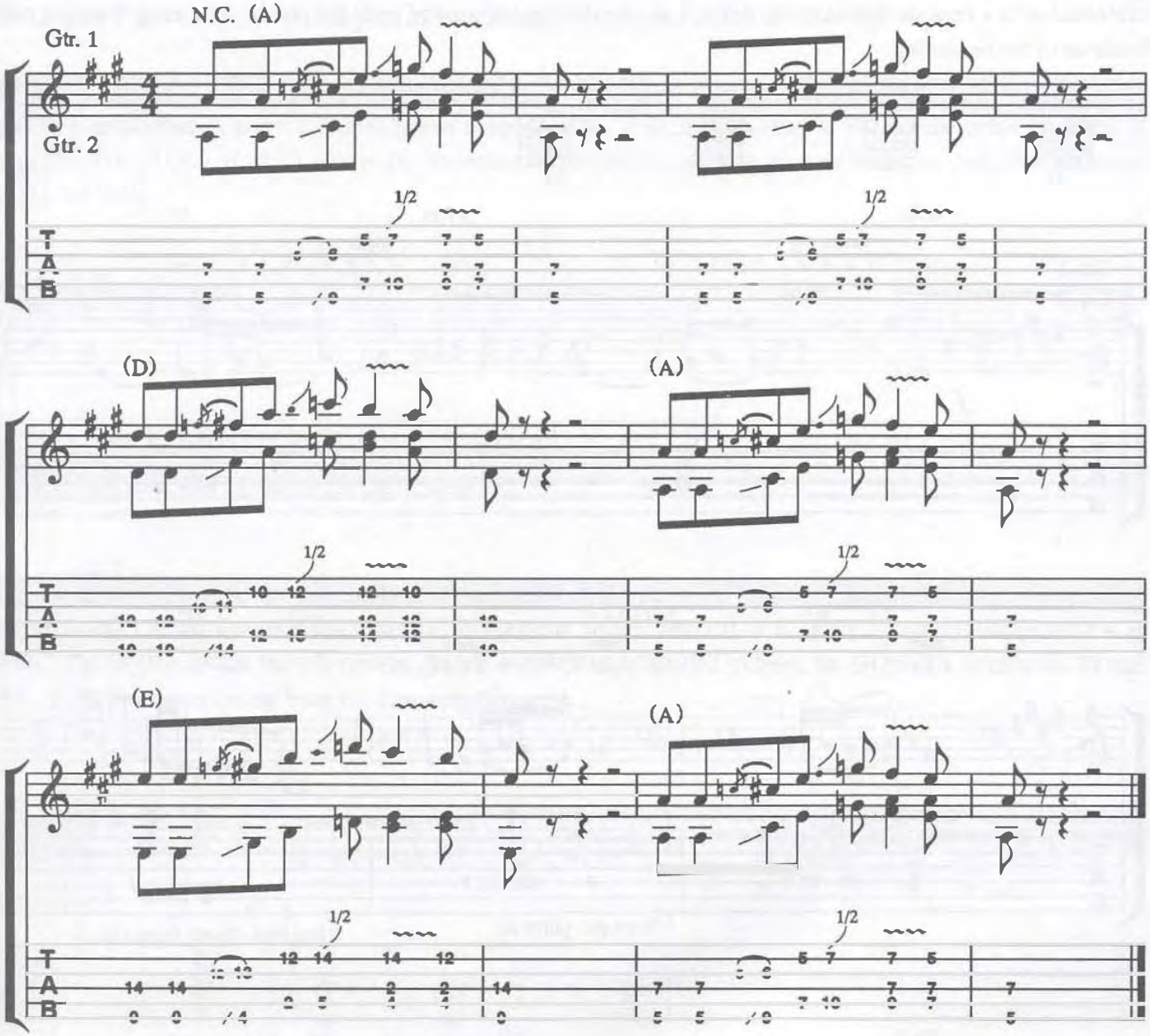
* Bass gtr. plays A

†Implied chords from Gtr. 2



Example 60

Last but not least is this memorable line from the Beatles, culled from A mixolydian (A B C♯ D E F♯ G, bars 1-4) and transposed to D (D E F♯ G A B C) and E mixolydian (E F♯ G♯ A B C♯ D) on the changes to IV and V respectively. Note the lower part (Gtr. 2) harmonizes the melody by adding to it the root note of the chord in question. Guitar 1 plays the melody 8va throughout with hammers and bends.



PART III: BLUES/ROCK LEAD GUITAR

Can blues people play rock? Can rock people play blues? The answers lie only with you and your feelings about music. On one hand, the two styles continue to influence each other and guitar players like Stevie Ray Vaughan, Johnny Winter, Robert Cray and even Buddy Guy, all carry a torch for each. On the other hand, some players will always be lumped in one camp or the other, being as it is so hard to do both equally well. And, of course, there's nothing wrong with being "lumped"—the styles will always coexist. See Appendix I for an examination of their distinctions, from musical forms to number of amps.

You could say "blues/rock guitar solos are like blues solos only played faster, louder and with a rock and roller's phrasing, articulations and attitude," but there is more to it than just that. The deep-seated reasons for their divergence encompasses factors like history, technology and changing trends and tastes. This part of the book aims to expose the bare bones that fuse the two together—the vertebrae that make up the spine of blues/rock, if you will. The strongest force is, of course, the pentatonic minor scale (and added notes) which will be dealt with in "exploded view" fashion. Also of importance is the use of the pentatonic major and mixolydian scales—put forth in a contextual way.

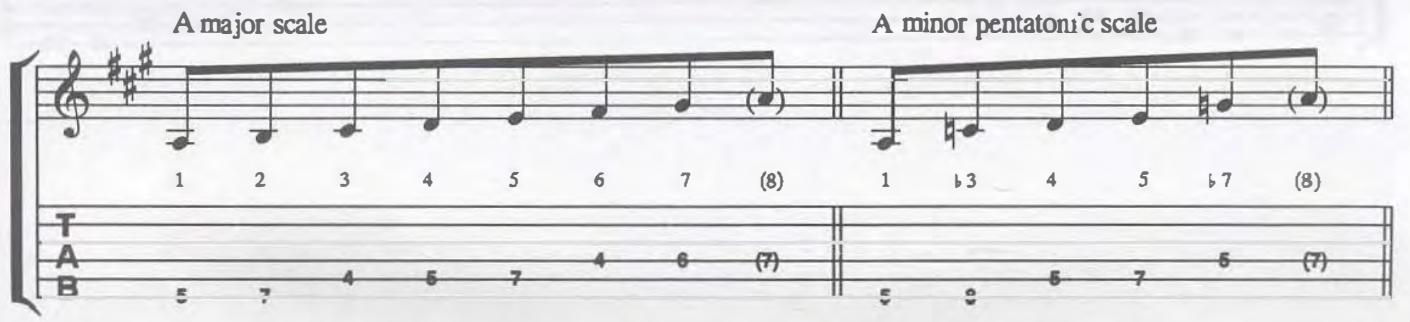
The Pentatonic Minor Scale

This scale is without question the foundation beneath single-line playing in blues/rock. The intervallic formula of the five-note scale is 1 ♭3 4 5 ♭7 (i.e. Am pentatonic = A C D E G) and has been around hundreds of years before Chuck Berry and the electric guitar were born. The scale has its origins in ancient Chinese and Indian folk music, clear on the other side of the world.

It is important to understand that no matter how much you see a guitarist's fret hand move up and down the neck when playing this scale, only five notes are being played. In other words, five letter names (i.e. A C D E G) are repeated by playing the same exact pitch on up to six different strings in six different places on the neck, or by playing up to four different octaves of the five notes. The potential for different string groupings, positions and fingerings are infinite, although certain possibilities have remained most common among an entire world population of guitar players.

As discussed earlier, the pentatonic minor scale can be superimposed over a major key signature, and the minor 3rd of the scale mixes with the often heard major 3rd found in the chords of a song. In notating music where this occurs, the major key signature is maintained, despite how "minor" the music may sound, and accidentals tell us where the "blue notes" like the ♭3, ♭5 and ♭7 are played. For example, the key of A is based on the A major scale which spells: A B C♯ D E F♯ G♯ A. When the A pentatonic minor scale is used, (A C D E G), we must alter C♯ to C and G♯ to G.

Example 61

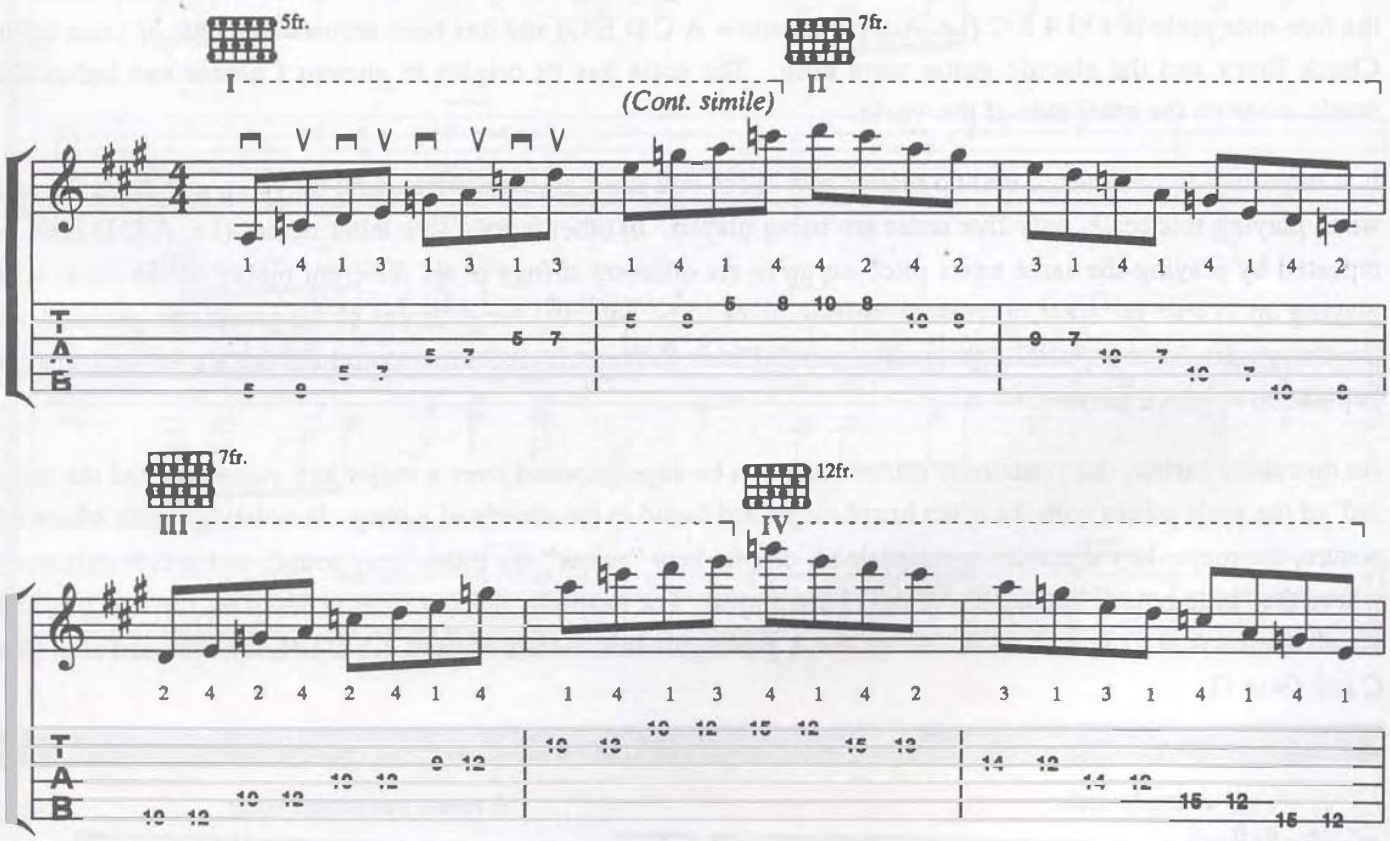


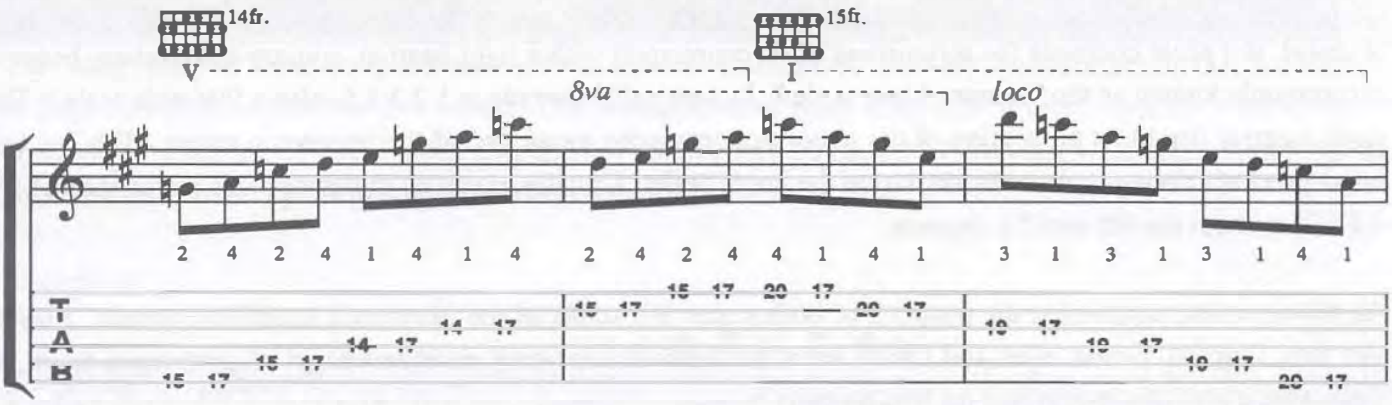
Connecting The Five Pentatonic Minor Forms

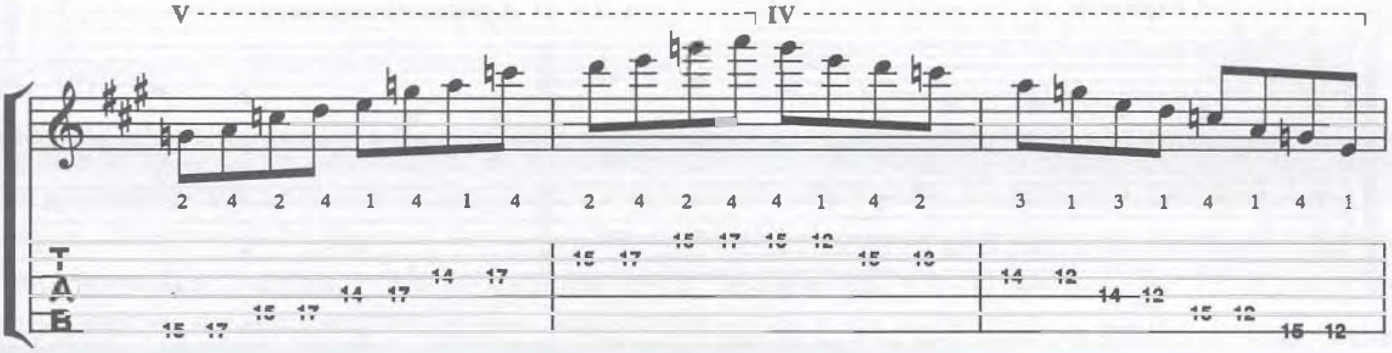
For practical purposes, there is a fingering form that covers all six strings based on and starting from each one of the five notes (hence "penta") of the scale. It is essential that all guitarists are intimately familiar with these forms—especially improvisers. These five forms divide the entire guitar neck into five "areas," that each in their own right can inspire thousands of guitar solos. Each form arranges the notes differently and therefore feels unique. Some licks playable in one form can be virtually unplayable in another. Although it is common practice for blues/rockers to use all five forms in fragments (2 or 3 strings at a time), it is important to know all five fingerings intimately.

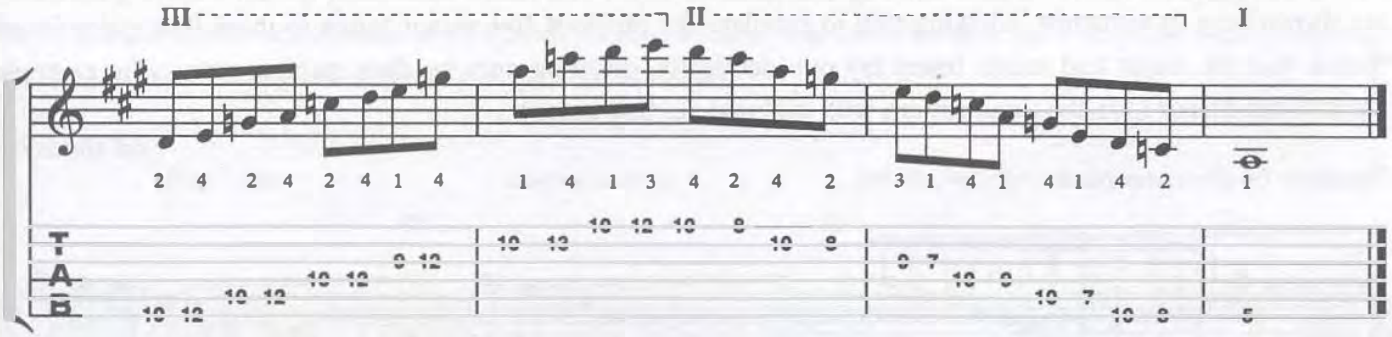
From this point on, the five forms will be identified by the scale tone found on the 6th string. Form I = root, Form II = ♭3, Form III = 4, Form IV = 5 and Form V = ♭7. We will begin on the lowest root of Form I in G and ascend through all five forms until reaching the highest note of Form I again, one octave higher, then reverse the whole process, ending on the original low root. Pay close attention to the indicated position shifts that connect the forms, as this is your key to transposing the exercise to any and all other keys. Fingerings will likely vary in actual playing situations. The suggested fingerings enable you to connect the forms smoothly. Alternate picking beginning on a downstroke should be applied throughout.

Example 62




14fr.
15fr.
V
I
8va
loco
T
A
B


V
IV
T
A
B

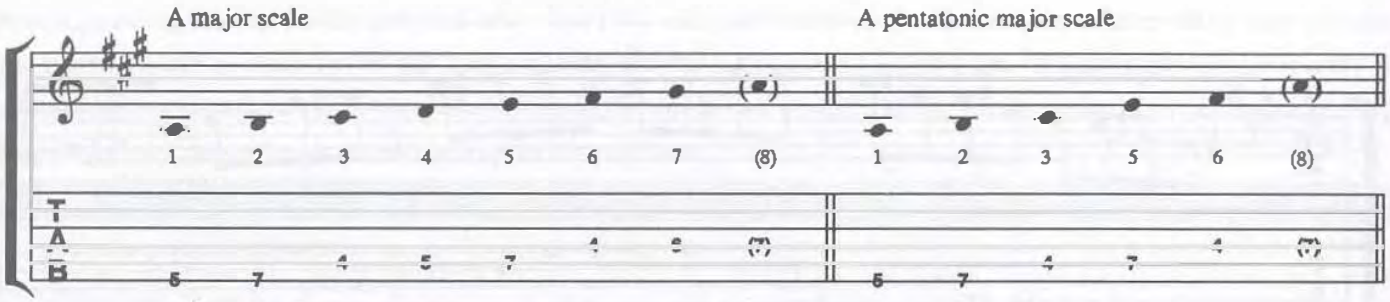

III
II
I
T
A
B

The Pentatonic Major Scale

In mood, this scale contrasts the seriousness of its counterpart with a light-hearted, country-like feeling, hence it is commonly known as the "country-blues scale." Its intervallic formula is 1 2 3 5 6 (also a five-note scale.) The chief contrast lies in its possession of the major 3rd versus the minor 3rd of the pentatonic minor. The 2nd and 6th degrees also bring it closer in kinship to the major scale. Actually, it can be thought of as a major scale (1 2 3 4 5 6 7) without the 4th and 7th degrees.

As stated earlier, combining the qualities of both scales is a staple of the blues/rock sound and appeal. Players like Eric Clapton, Leslie West and Dicky Betts are renowned for their extended usage of pentatonic major, as well as their abilities to combine the two lyrically.

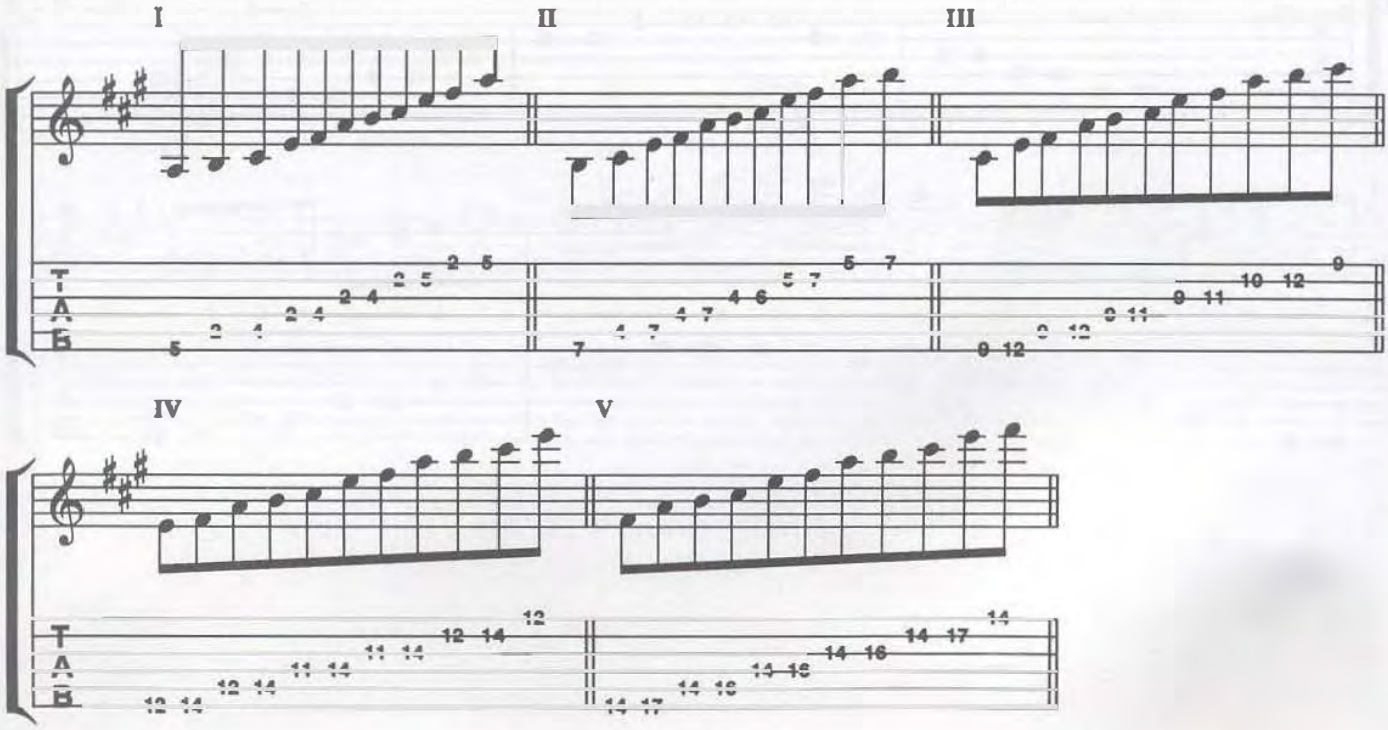
Example 63 (Not recorded)



Five Forms of Pentatonic Major

Because blues/rock guitarists do not tend to lean on this scale as hard as country guitarists, extensive use of its five forms (originating on each scale degree like pentatonic minor) are not often found. However, the five forms are shown here in sequence, allowing you to compare the previous five minor forms to these five major forms. Notice that the major and minor forms lay out identically, differing only by their starting note. (For example: Major I and Minor I are the same pattern with different starting tones.)

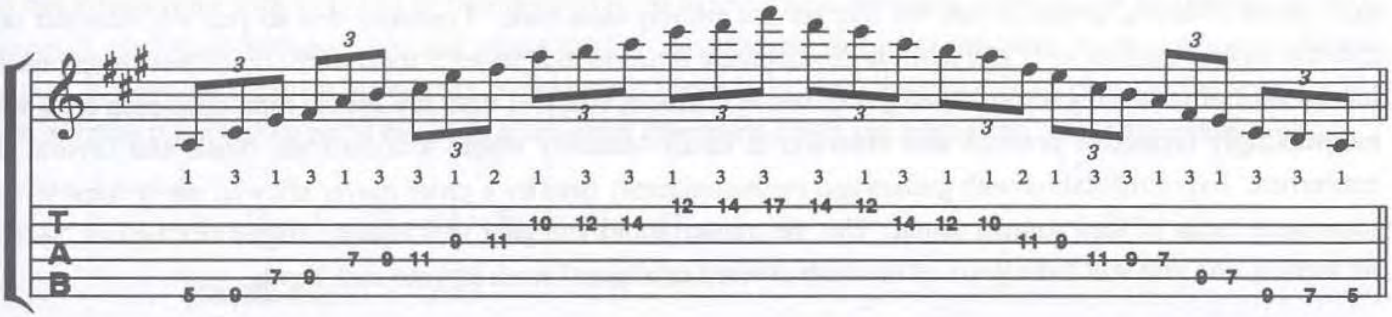
Example 64 (Not recorded)



The "Long Form" Major Pentatonic

The "long form" of the major pentatonic scale is an often encountered and very useful fingering that is comprised of fragments from each of the five forms. This arrangement of notes allows for greater mobility when ascending or descending across the neck, and it gets right to the heart of the matter by showing what areas, fingerings and positions are favored by the guitarists mentioned in this book.

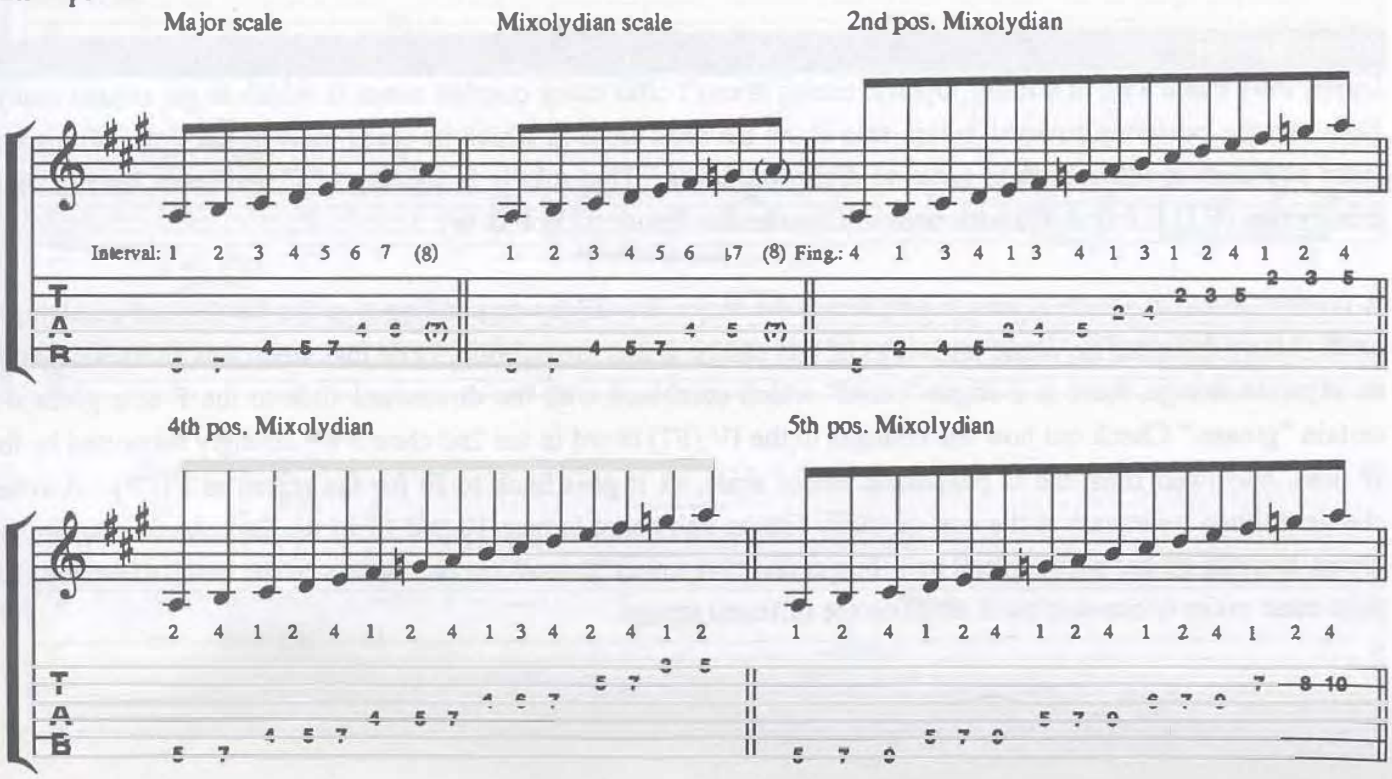
Example 65



The Mixolydian Mode

As mentioned earlier, the mixolydian mode is much like the major scale, the only note difference is the 7th degree. The lowered 7th degree of the mixolydian scale makes it a more viable choice for blues/rock situations that often include dominant or implied dominant chords. You may also want to think of this mode as pentatonic major with the added 4th and ♭7th degrees. Whatever your view, it is a major-family sound that is rarely used in its full glory, fragments of it combined with pentatonic minor are responsible for many novel single line riffs and guitar solos in the style. Check out these three 3-octave fingerings for A mixolydian below, and experiment with combining them with the pentatonic minor and major forms found in close range. When studying the solos in Part IV, look out for occurrences of this mode marked by lines that have the ♮3rd and ♭7th as the focal point while the 4th, 5th and 6th degrees of the key in question are added.

Example 66



PART IV: GUITAR GREATS, US TO UK

This section is designed as a collection of character studies. Each piece brings together a particular player's most identifiable trademarks as they would play them, in the context of a vamp associated with each musician. These solos are based on extensive research of each player's style through varied sources, presenting musical ideas that are transplanted from the feels and tempos they were found in to work in this fabricated situation. Understandably, this process (which I call "making monsters") finds our guitar greats in a somewhat unnatural light where phrasing decisions and the like are not entirely their own. I mention this so you will consider that musical aspects such as rests and motivic development inherent to a player's style were sometimes compromised for the sake of producing a condensed yet intensive character study. I tried my best to reproduce each style with painstakingly repetitive practice and attention to detail—notably where articulations, touch and rhythm are concerned. Experimentation with guitars and amps commonly used by a given player allowed me to come within reasonable range of their known sound. Use the transcriptions and your ears equally, digest lick by lick, section by section, and you will have years of the most revered musicians' work in your own hands.

Allman Brothers

The Allman Brother's Band is an American institution with a long history dating back to their 1969 debut. They are accountable for bringing older blues and R&B sounds to the attention of mainstream rock audiences. A great part of their sound is due to Duane Allman's slide guitar playing in open E. Although he often adeptly played standard tuned guitar without the slide, his warm, humbucker pickup slide guitar sound was his trademark. His self-professed influences were Robert Johnson, Blind Willie Johnson and Muddy Waters. Duane is largely responsible for bringing slide guitar from the blues to the foreground of rock while raising its voice with the help of extreme amp wattage. The group's other guitarman, Dicky Betts, was a perfect foil to Duane, with his sound being bright and aggressive, coming mostly from the bridge and middle position of a Gibson Les Paul. Dicky's playing has a strong country influence running through it, marked by long flowing legato phrases and extensive use of pentatonic major.

Duane Allman

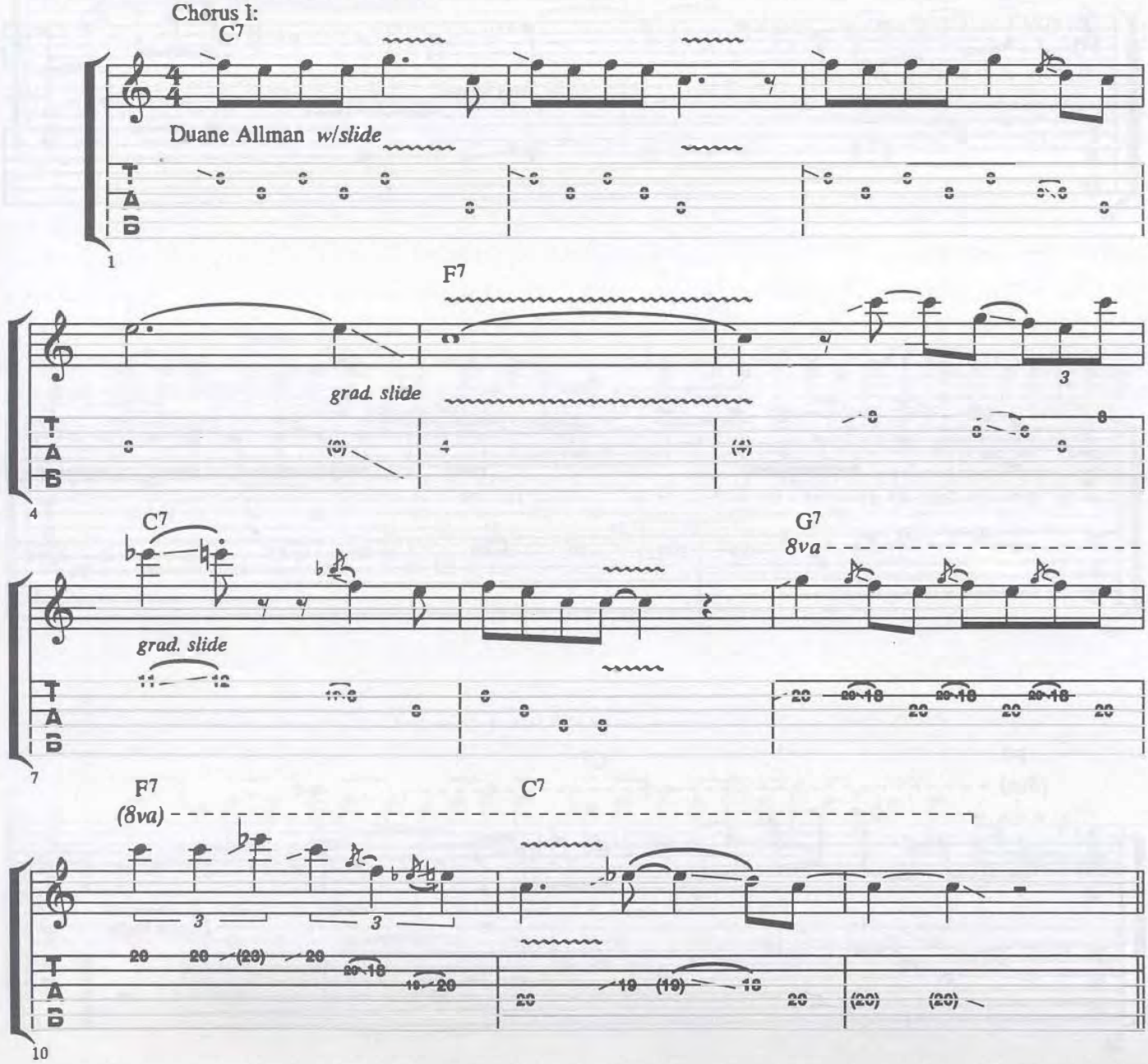
Duane truly made a lot of a little. Open E tuning doesn't offer many comfort zones in which to get around easily. Note that the positions covered in this solo show the neck areas in which he spent most of his time. Transpose these positions to other keys in order to digest the ideas. This solo is in the key of C and leans heavily on C mixolydian (C D E F G A B♭) with nods to C pentatonic minor (C E♭ F G B♭).

A favorite move of Duane's was to emphasize the major 3rd (E) by suspending it to the 4th (F) and resolving it back. Many different rhythmic phrasings of this can be found throughout. Note that when this alteration occurs on separate strings, there is a slight "bleed" which combined with the downward slide to the F note gives it a certain "grease." Check out how the changes to the IV (F7) chord in the 2nd chorus are strongly supported by the E♭ note, borrowed from the C pentatonic minor scale, as it goes back to E♮ for the return to I (C7). Another classic Allman trademark is the sort of tricky unison lick heard in bars 10 and 11 of the 2nd chorus. Again, the grease is made by the slides, bleed and the general "imperfect" intonation that occurs in the quick movement the slide must make to connect the F notes on the different strings.

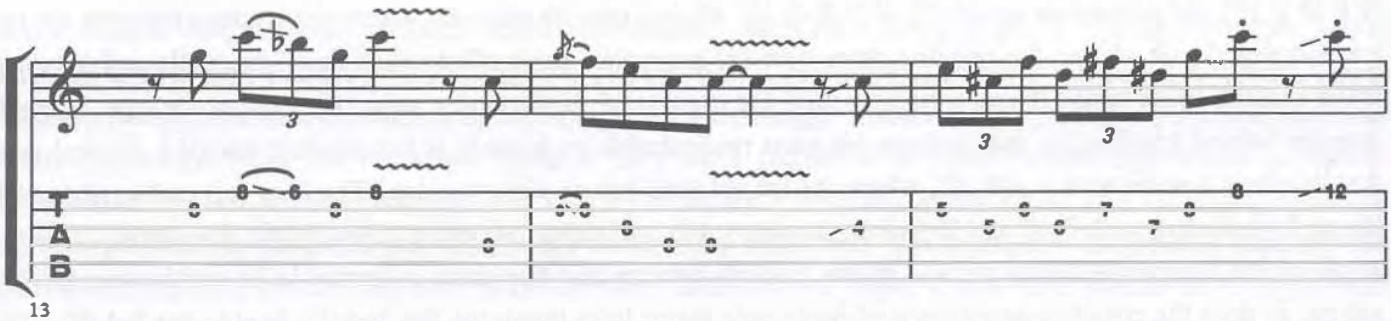
Dickey Betts

Dicky's style is marked by quick shifts between hard-core use of the blues scale (in this case the C blues scale: C E♭ F F♯ G B♭) and pentatonic major (C: C D E G A). He is a smooth operator where connections between the two are concerned—check out the opening three bars for example. Betts often relies on slides, pulls and hammers when making these connections, usually within the context of rhythmically repetitive note groupings. Another impetus behind his fluidity, and perhaps his most recognizable trademark, is his constant use of a musical germ that involves 3 notes with a pull-off, where the lowest note acts as a pivot point. The idea is found in plain view in bar 9 beginning with F, C and E♭ before moving on to variations involving other 3-note groupings. This is a staple of his improvisational style and points towards country and bluegrass influence in its continuous, flowing nature, as does the common occurrence of pentatonic major licks involving the 2nd (D) bent to the 3rd (E). This sort of thing is not unlike pedal steel and slide guitar repertoire--check out bars 4 and 11 for examples.

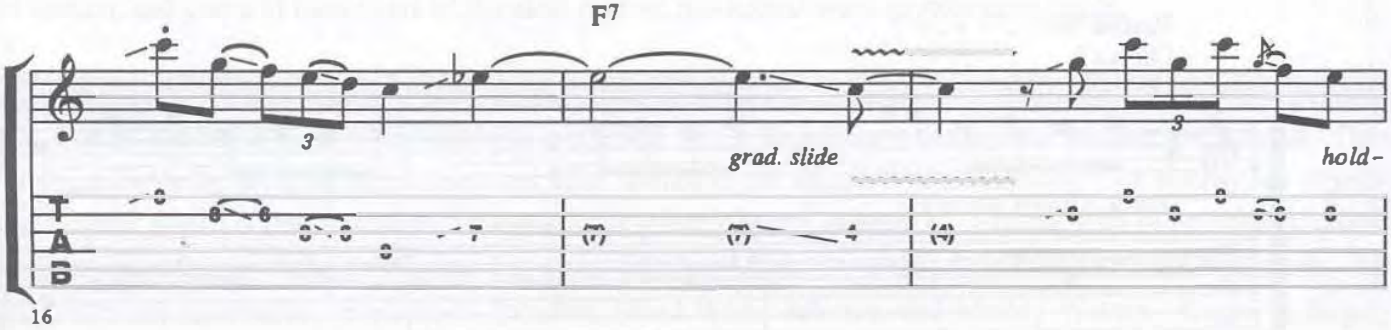
Open E tuning:
⑥ = E ⑤ = B ④ = E ③ = G♯ ② = B ① = E



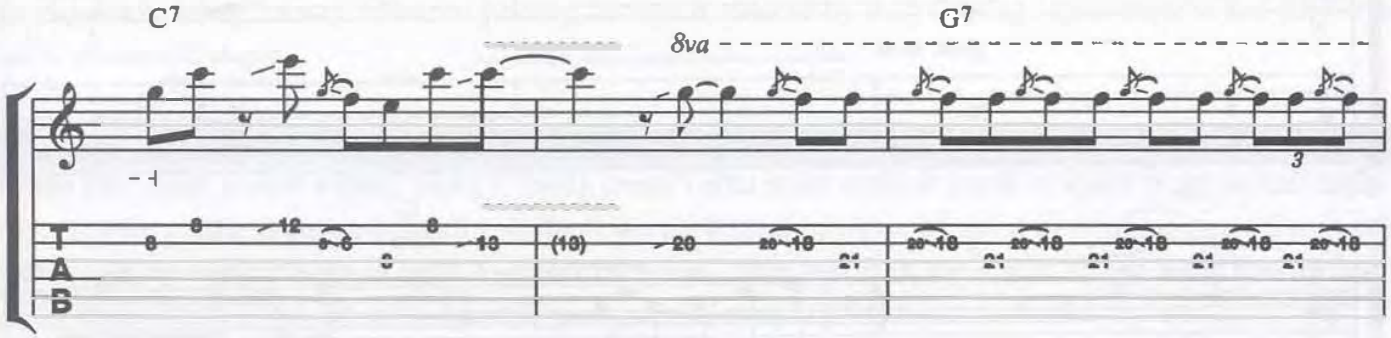
Chorus II:



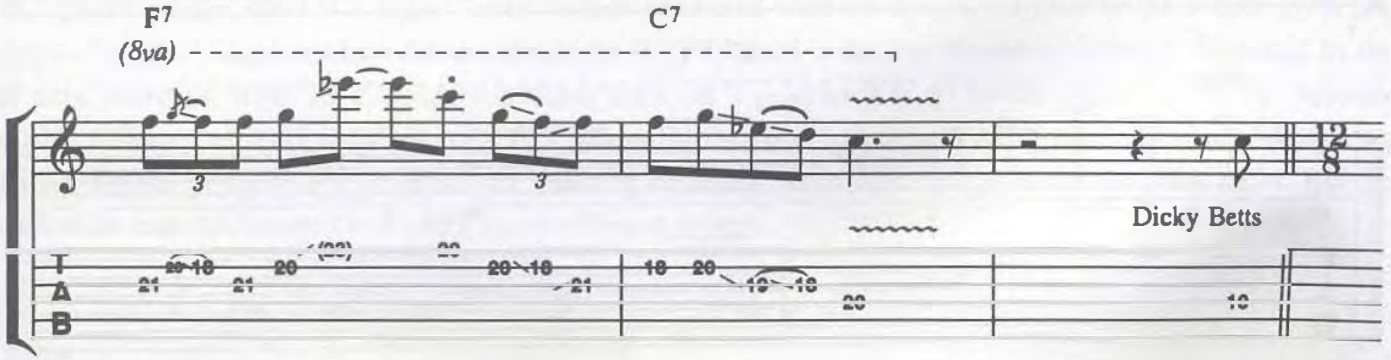
13



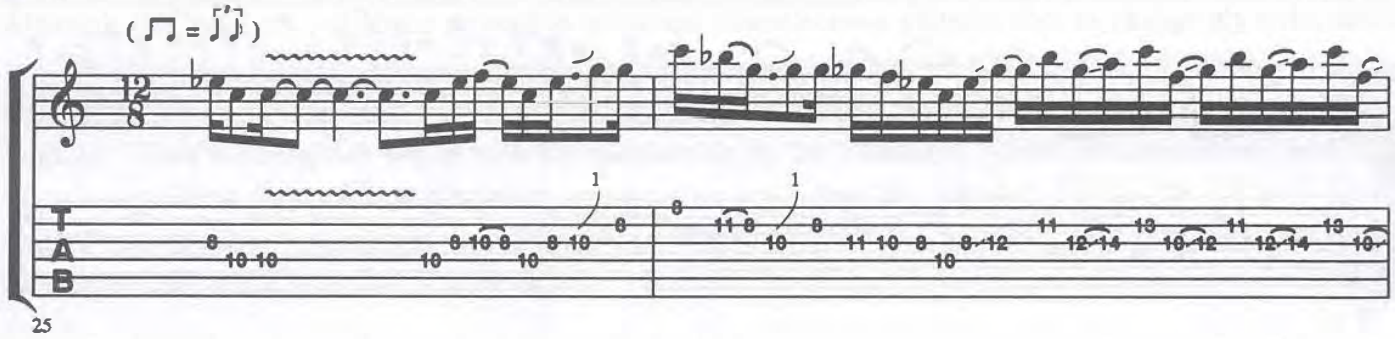
16

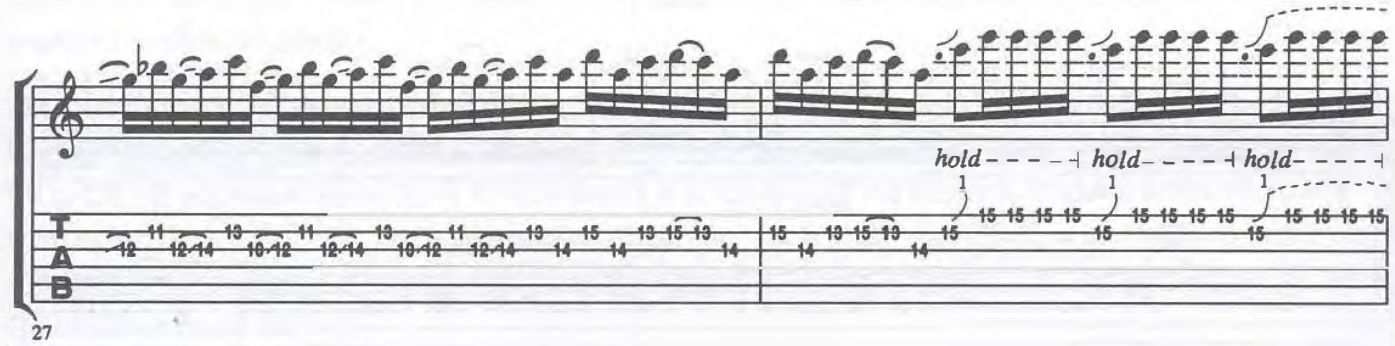


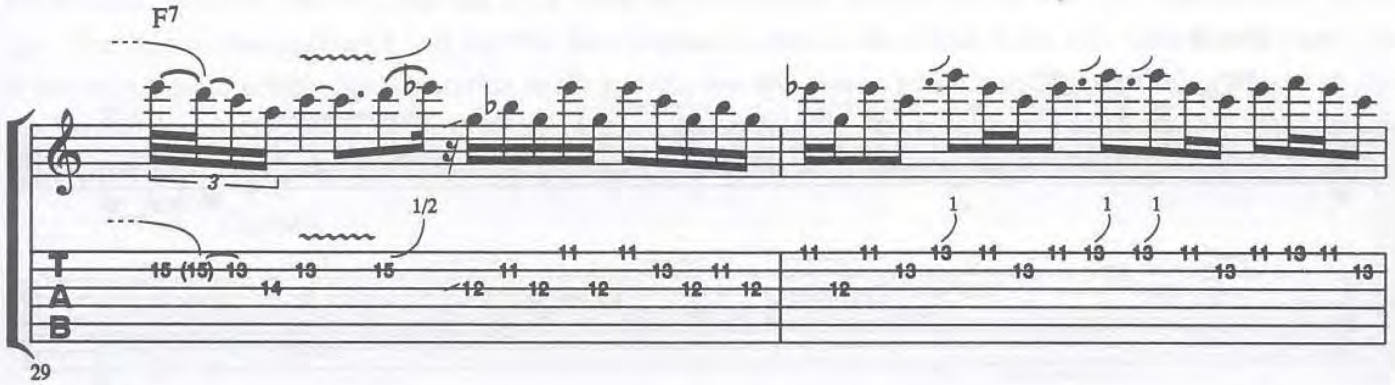
19

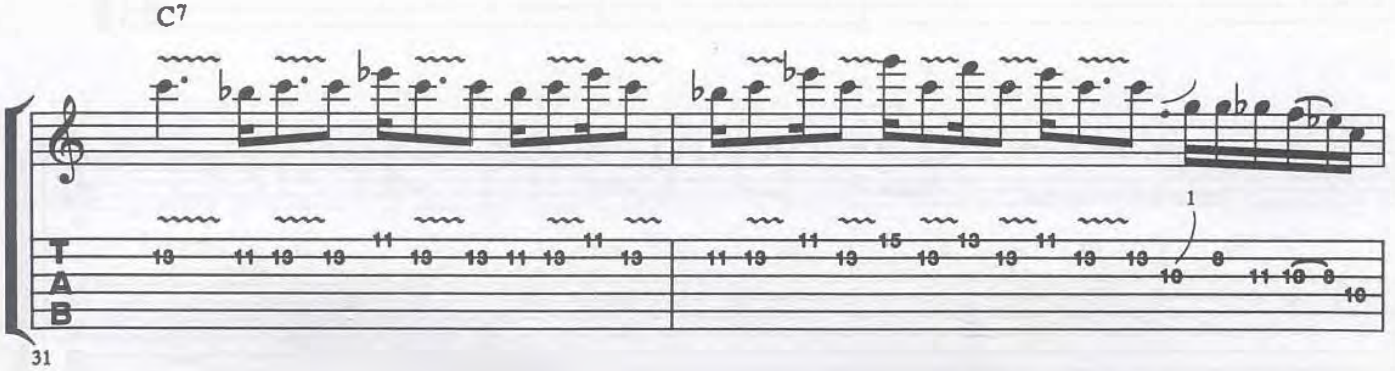


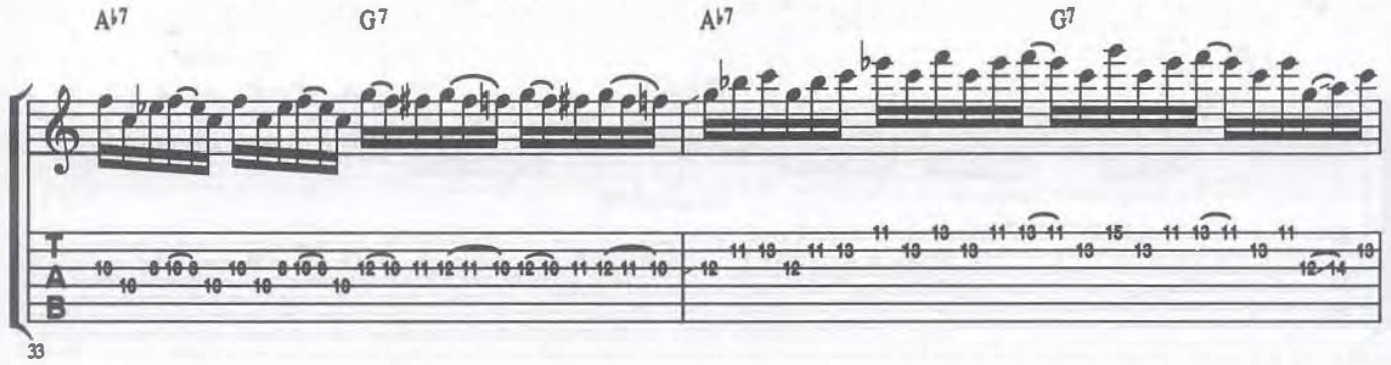
22

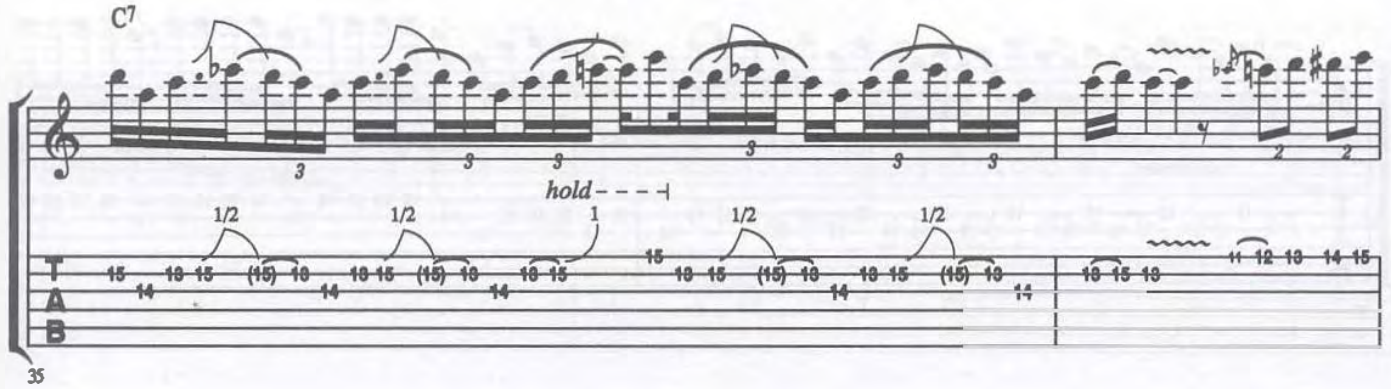

25

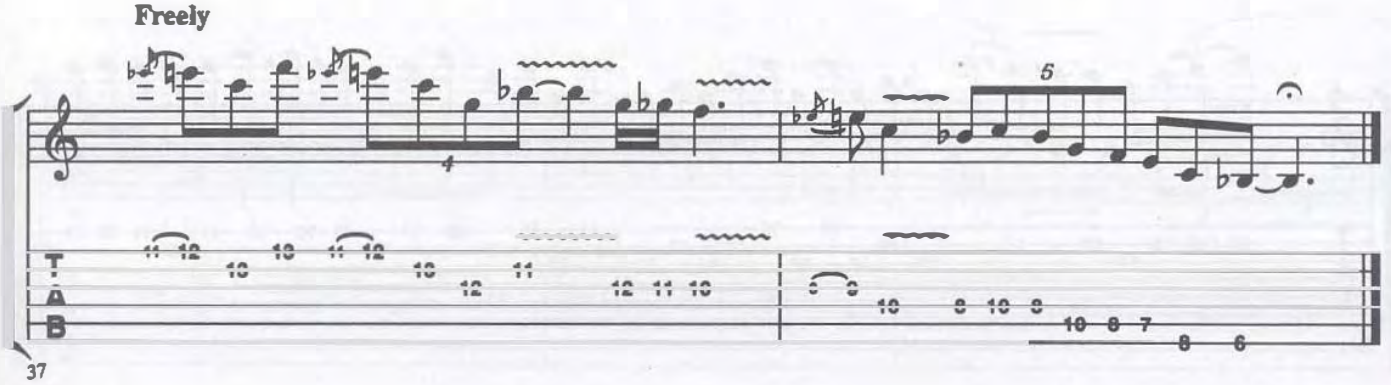

hold
hold
hold
27


F7
29


C7
31


A♭7
G7
A♭7
G7
33


C7
hold
1/2
1/2
1
1/2
1/2
35


Freely
37

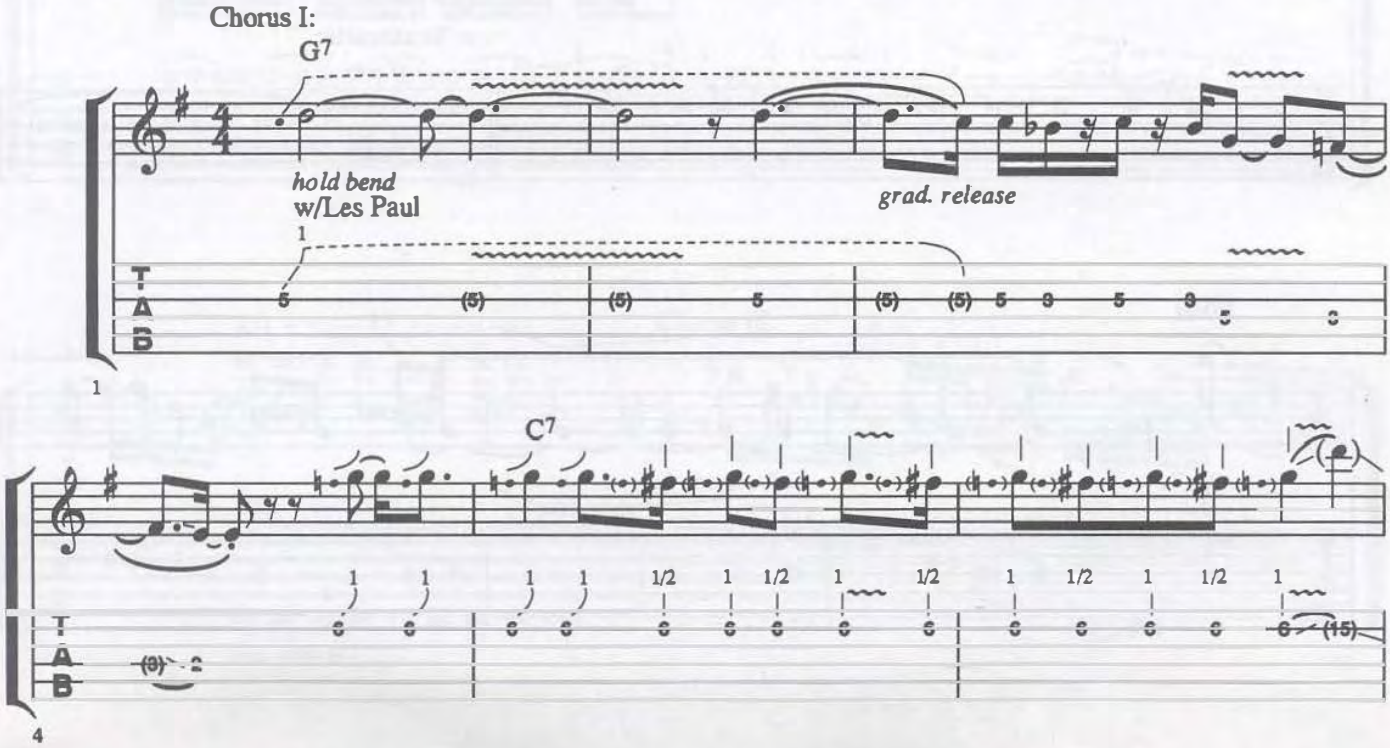
Jeff Beck

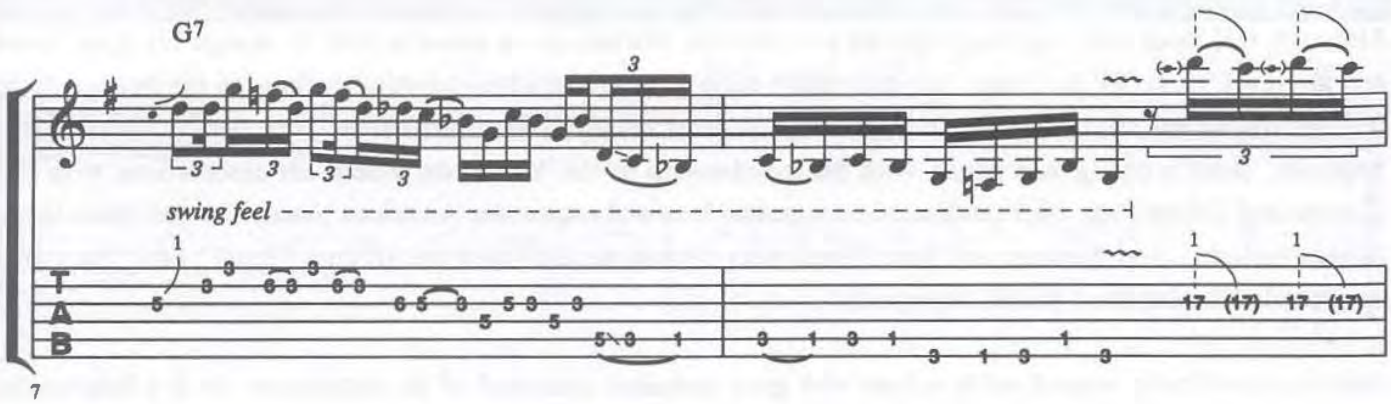
Although Jeff Beck has long been reputed as a musical chameleon—a guitarist able to change his style, sound and approach to deftly suit most any situation—there is an undeniable, heartfelt feeling of the blues running through his varied efforts. Jeff's interest in blues dates back to his musical roots as a teenage blues buff in England. Beck's emergence began with his membership in the Yardbirds, where his associations with Eric Clapton and Jimmy Page were predicated on a mutual love and respect for American blues. The Jeff Beck Group (which included Rod Stewart and Ron Wood) was formed in 1967 and the albums "Truth" and "Beck-Ola" spearheaded the attack of British blues/rock.

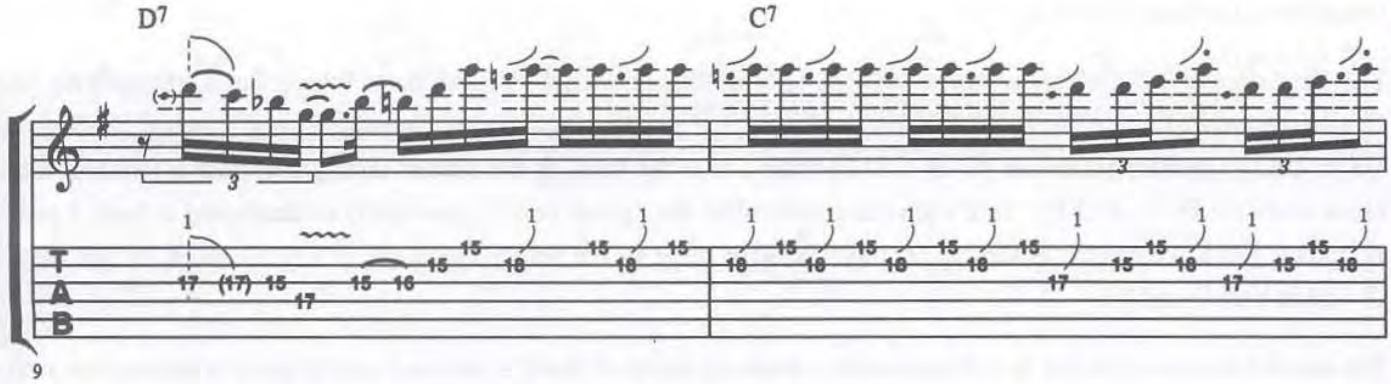
Beck is a terrifically unpredictable soloist with great technical command of his instrument—be it a Stratocaster, Telecaster or a Les Paul. He is most renowned for his amazing control and intonation of bends, unmistakable vibrato, and masterful tremelo bar work—not to mention his wholly-original touch, surpassed only by his remarkable instincts and taste.

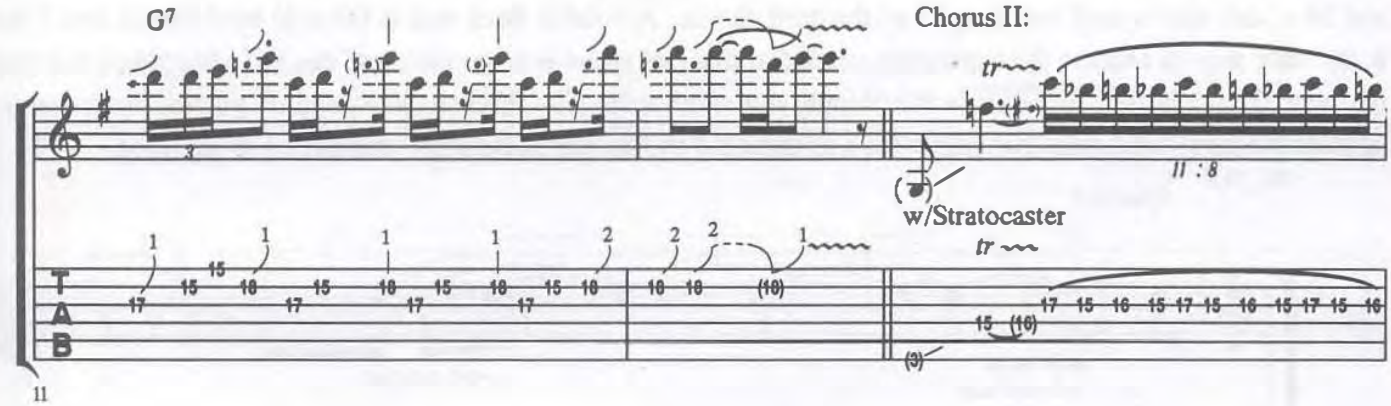
The first chorus of this three-chorus solo in G is dedicated to his "Truth" days where the unmistakable (and English) sound of a Gibson Les Paul (set to bridge pick up) played through a Marshall amp is heard. Talk about US to UK! G pentatonic minor (G B♭ C D F) form I is at the heart of the matter throughout with a touch of the G blues scale (G B♭ C C♯ D F). Jeff's amazing control of the "ghost bend" (pre-bend) is illustrated in bars 5 and 6. A known Beck trademark is the quick and repetitive bend to the root (G) via the ♭7 (F) followed by the unison G—as in bars 9 and 10.

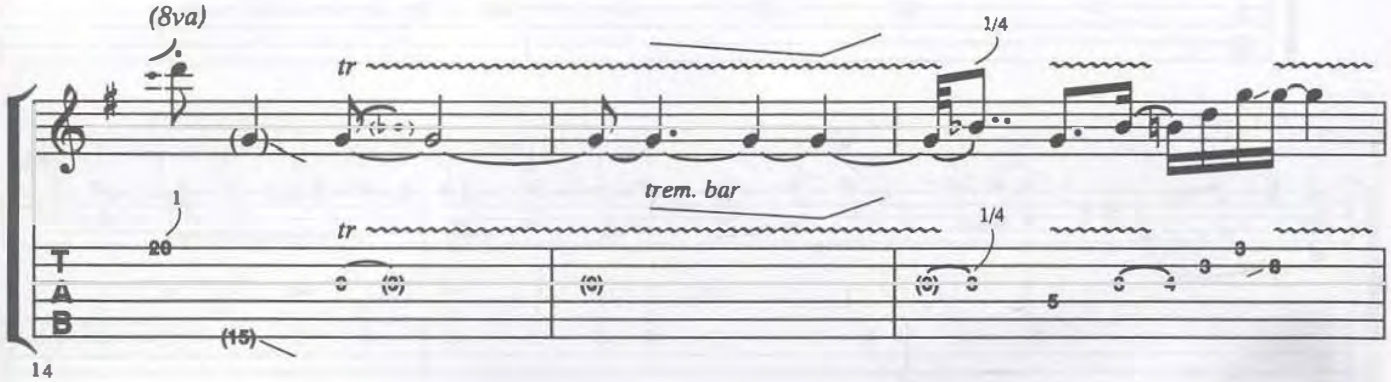
The second chorus switches to a Stratocaster—whereby some of Beck's patented and original whammy bar antics are replicated. Flashy trills of all sorts are slants on innovations by Mr. Les Paul himself—one of Jeff's biggest inspirations. Another Les Paul bag that Beck made his own are the fast pull off licks to open strings like in bars 9 and 10 of this chorus and bars 1 and 2 of the third chorus. A notable Beck trait is the held bend lick in bars 7 and 8: the only way to achieve the separation needed at this fast speed is to go pick-less (as Jeff often does) and play the bent G and fretted B♭ between the thumb and another finger. Beck is also fond of playing double-stops without the pick—and ones that skip even 2 strings (3rd chorus, bar 10) are not uncommon to his solos.

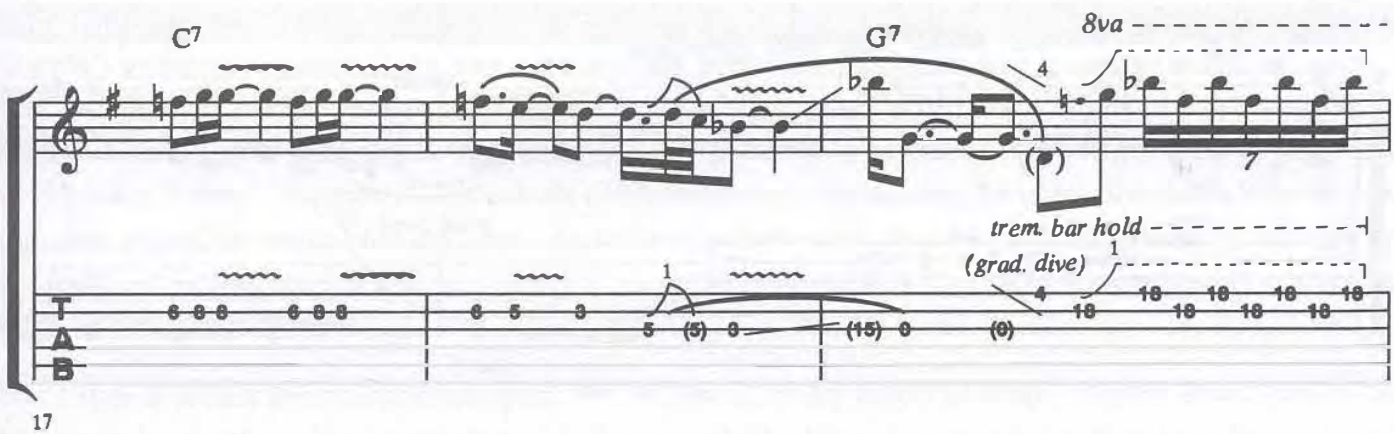


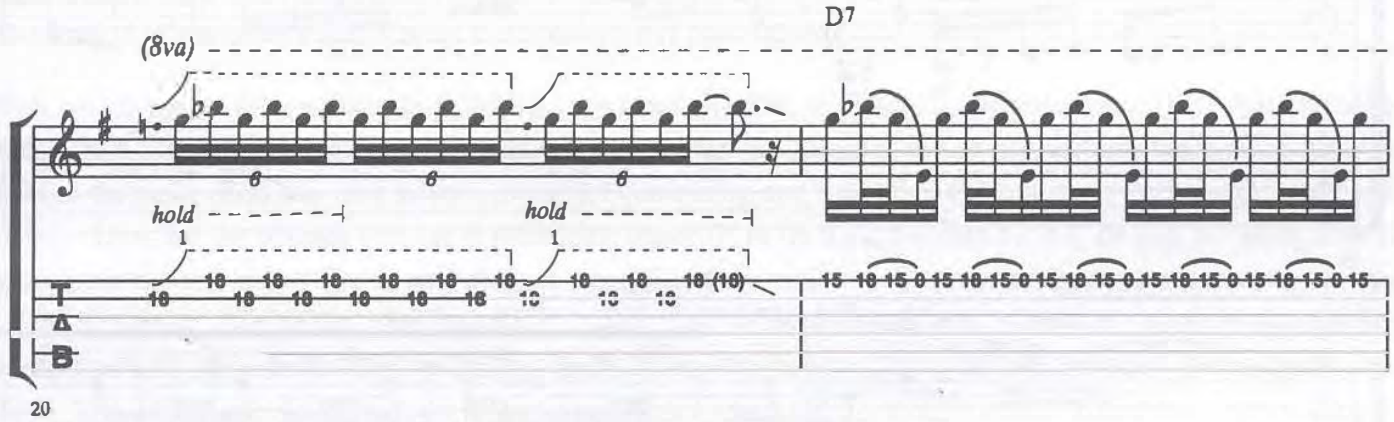

G7
swing feel
7

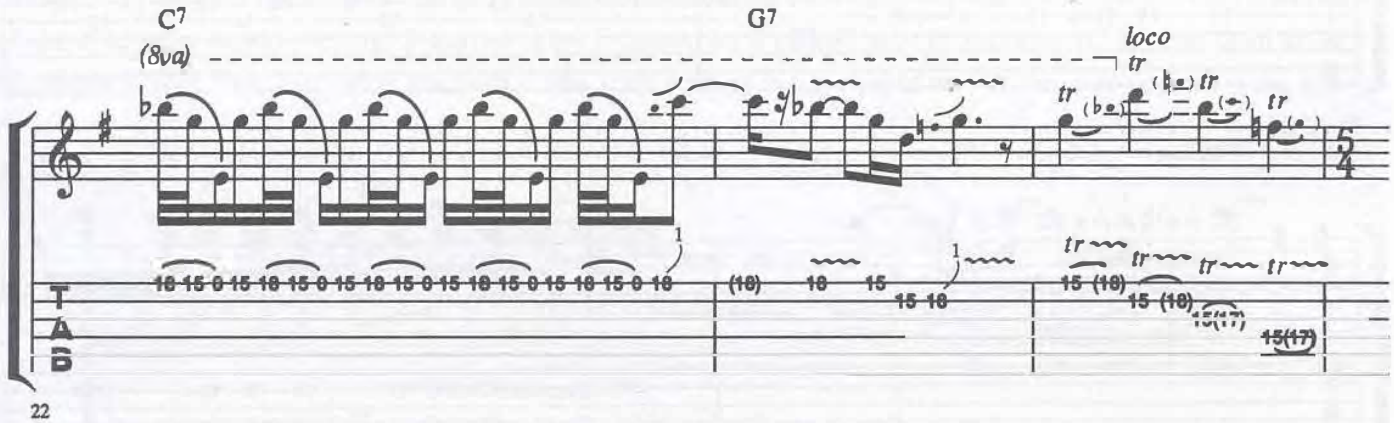

D7
C7
9

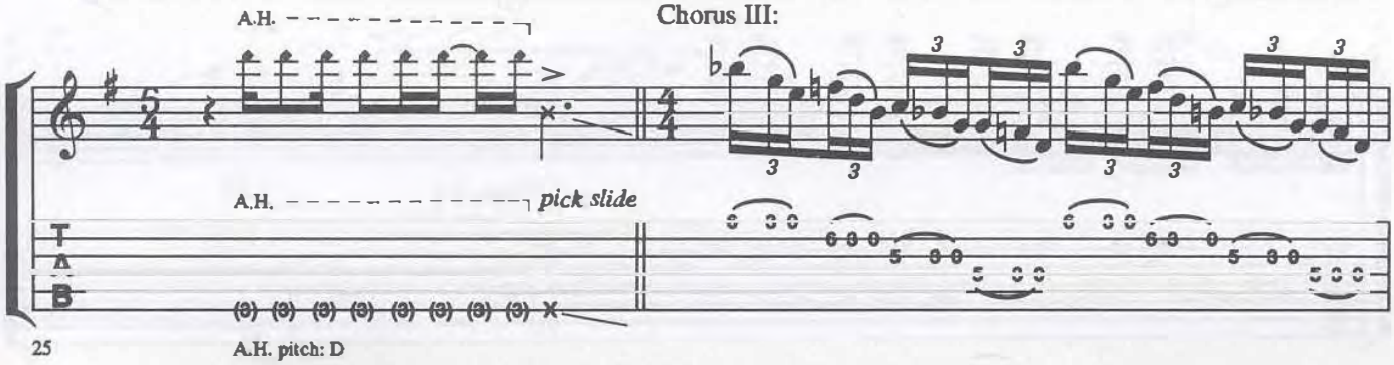

G7
Chorus II:
tr
II : 8
w/Stratocaster
11

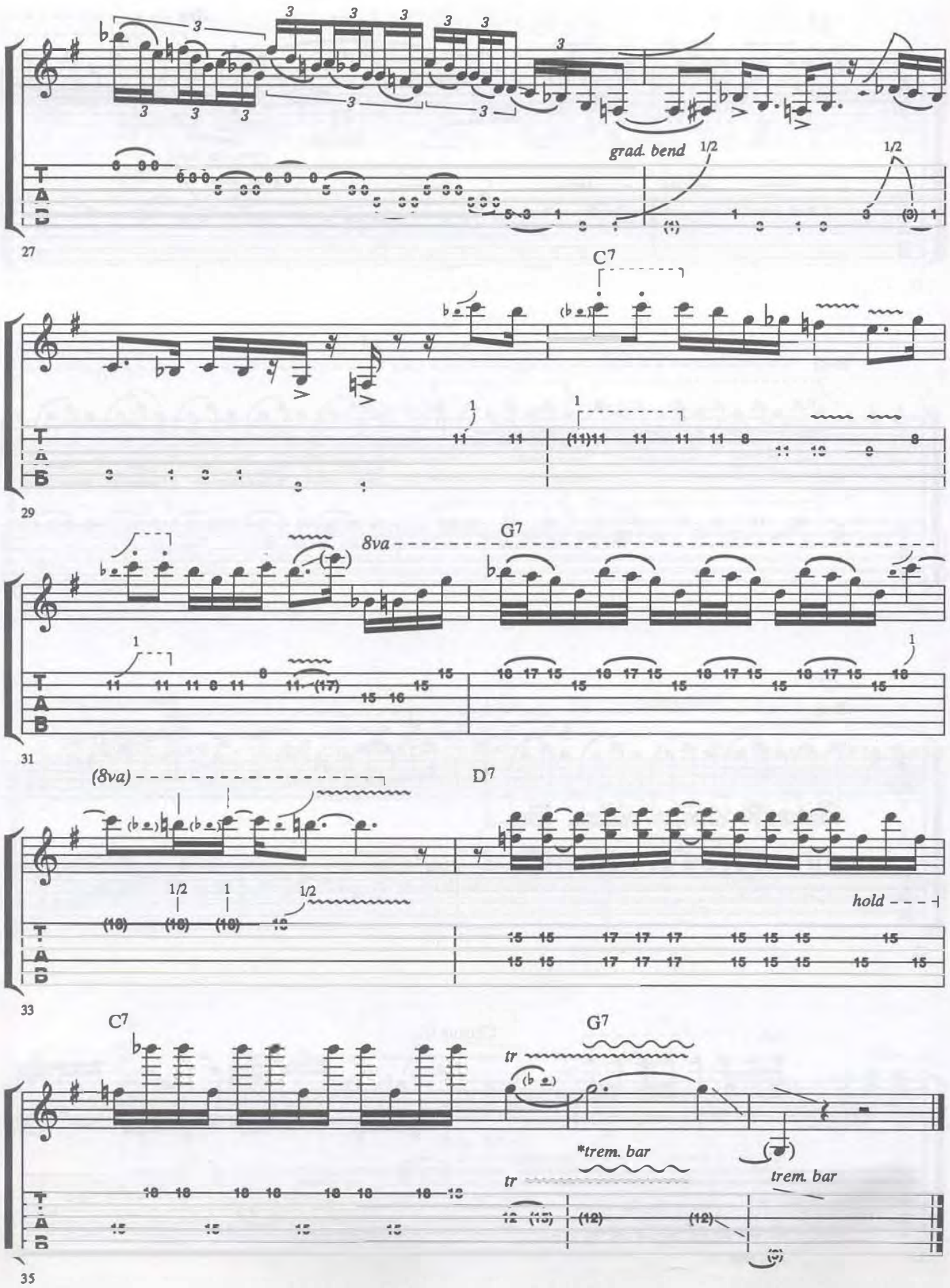

(8va)
tr
1/4
trem. bar
14


C7
G7
8va
trem. bar hold
(grad. dive)
17


(8va)
D7
hold
hold
20


C7
G7
(8va)
loco
tr
22


A.H.
Chorus III:
A.H.
pick slide
25
A.H. pitch: D



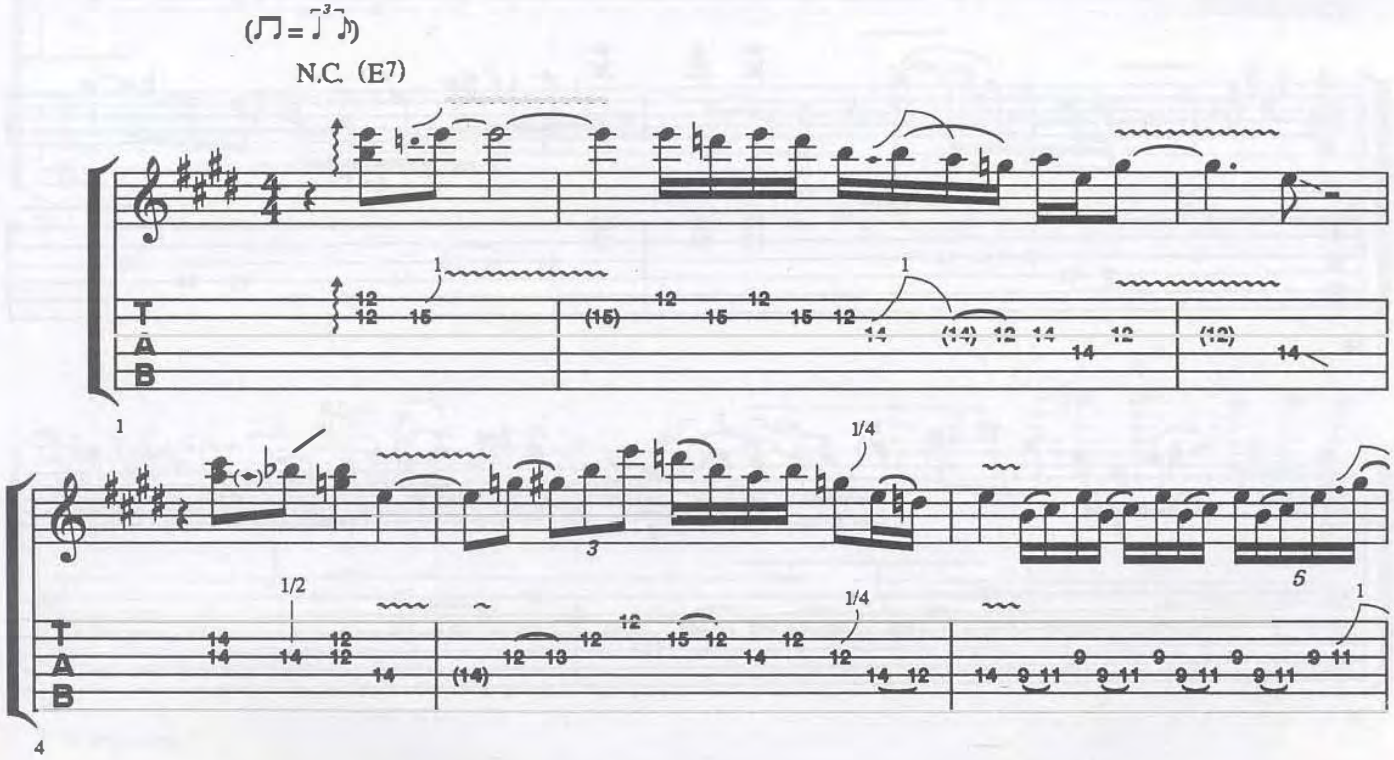
*"wiggle" trem. bar at approx. same speed as trill.

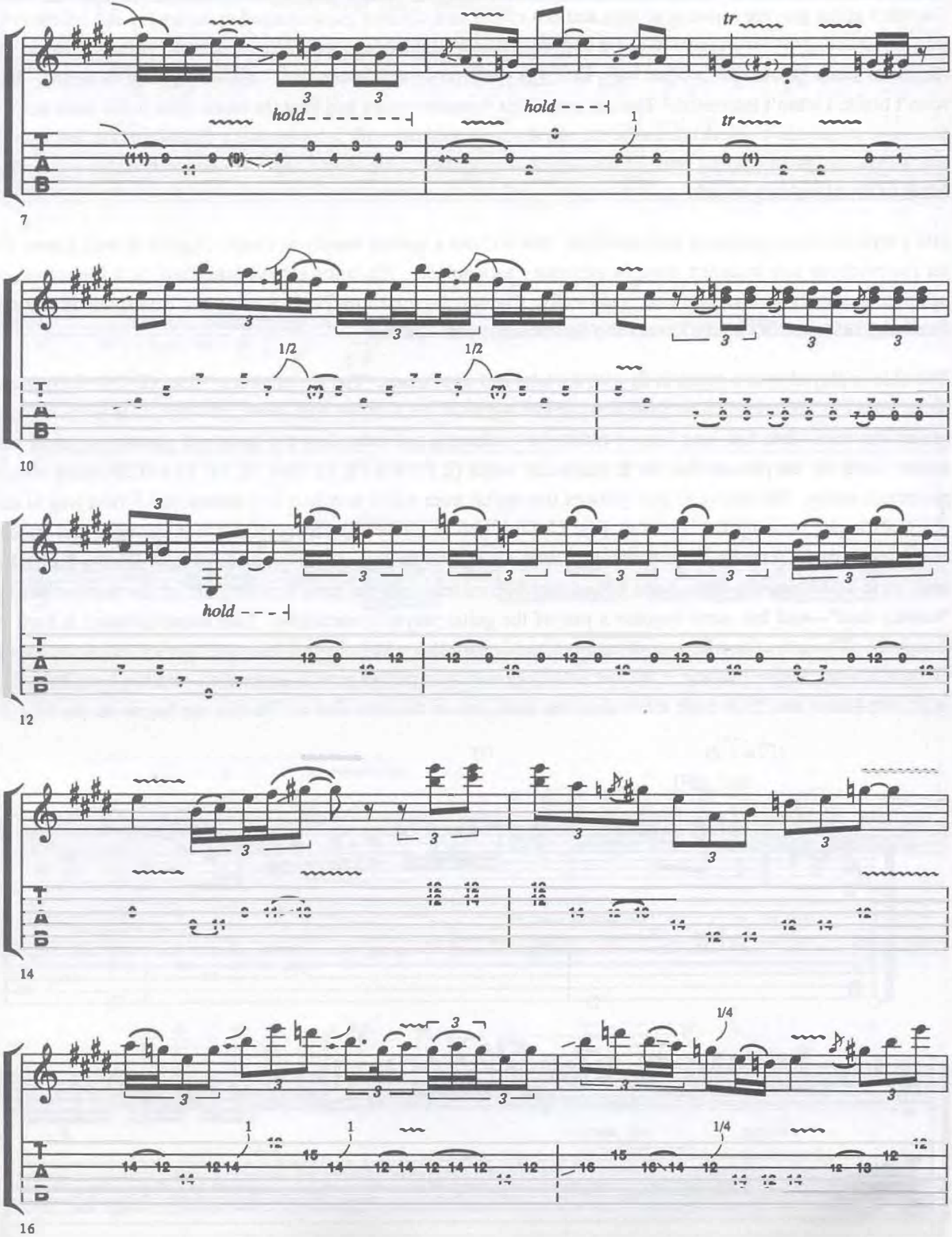
Eric Clapton

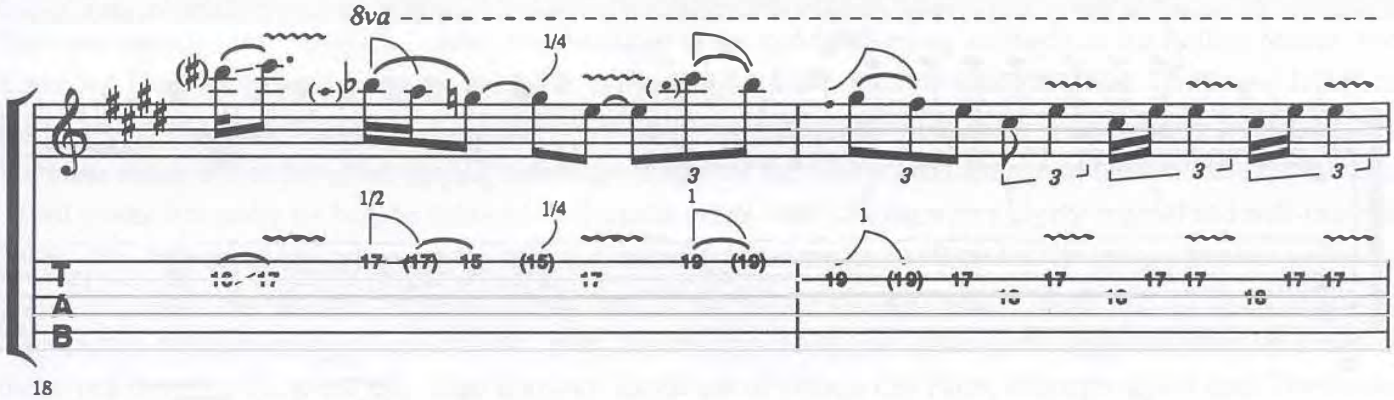
Clapton's guitar playing career is as long and diversified as the line of guitarists and musicians he has influenced. Like Jeff Beck, he was fortunate to come to prominence at an early age with The Yardbirds, while also in awe of American blues. More than a blues buff, Eric was a self-professed "blues snob" and was quoted as saying, "If it wasn't black, I wasn't interested." This attitude of his formative years had kept the blues close to his heart despite the many stages his musical life has seen. As featured guitarist with John Mayall's Bluesbreakers and shortly afterwards, the guitar-playing third of blues/rock supergroup Cream, Eric Clapton is unquestionably a founding father of the blues/rock sound.

Eric's style is at once personal and universal. Not without a healthy supply of chops, Clapton is well known for his reservedness and tendency towards simplicity as a soloist. His solos are distinguished by a foundation of balance, authority and stateliness. Generally, Clapton favored Les Pauls during his Bluesbreaker period, Firebirds, 335's and SG's with Cream and Stratocasters post-Cream.

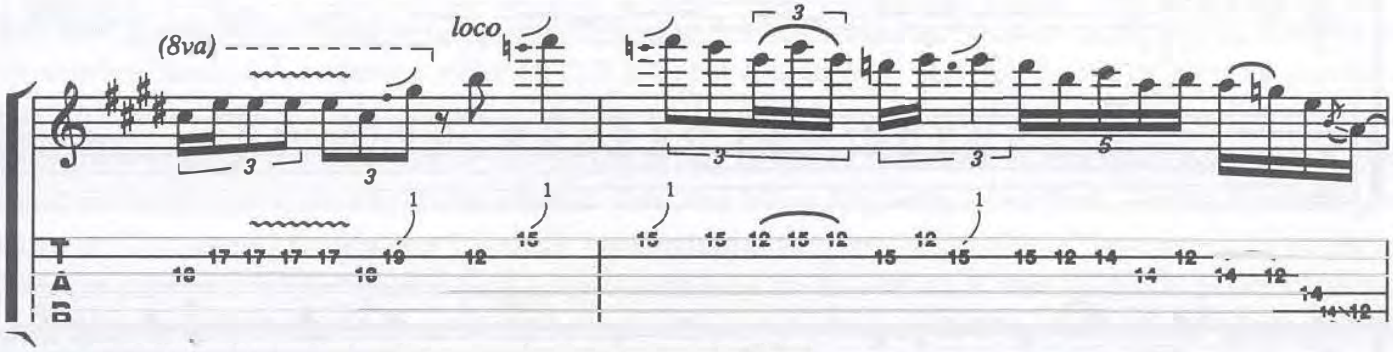
This solo is played over a vamp in E, with a triplet feel a la Cream. The E pentatonic minor (E G A B D) forms range from I in open position to I and II an octave higher at the 12th fret and above, and this scale is the impetus behind the solo. Eric has long been a master of combining and balancing the moods of pentatonic minor and major. Look for the phrases that use E pentatonic major (E F♯ G♯ B C♯, i.e. bars 10, 14, 19 and 20) along with E pentatonic minor. His ability to play phrases that swing from major to minor in a natural and lyrical way is one of his strongest trademarks. Another Eric Clapton trait is the seamlessness of position changes that further compliment the smoothness of his phrasing: check out bars 15 through 22 for evidence of this. During his Cream days, Eric affectionately named the sound that occurs when all the tone is rolled off of the rhythm pickup "woman tone"—and has since become a part of the guitar player's vernacular. This sound is heard in bars 19 though 27. The solo ends with a smoking pentatonic minor lick with pulls and hammers that are characteristic of Clapton's faster, legato playing: 3 slurred notes followed by a picked note in succession. He has been known to begin this 4-note idea from other intervals of the scale such as the root, ♭3rd or ♭7th-this one begins on the 5th.



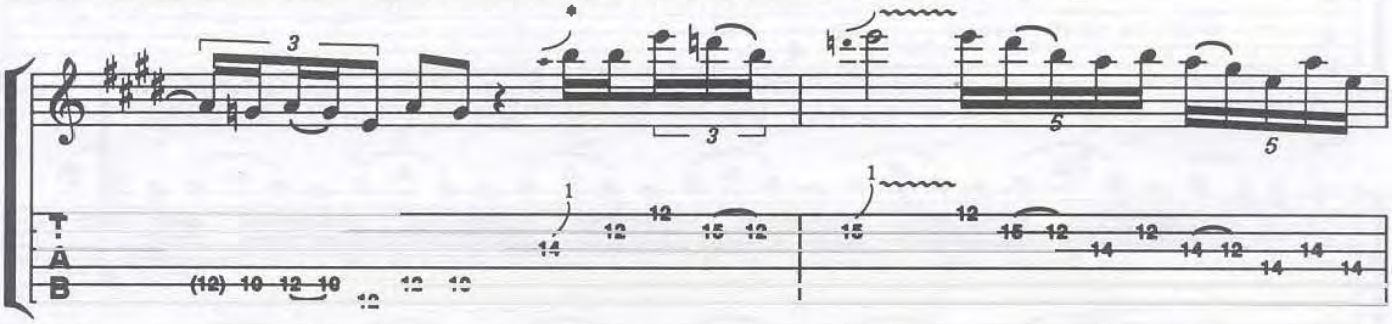

hold
hold
tr
tr
hold
1/2
1/2
1/4
1/4



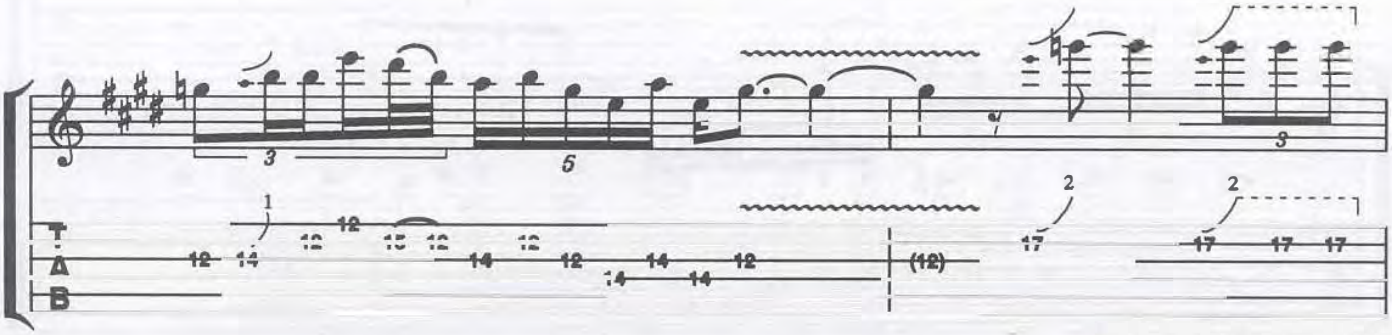
18



20

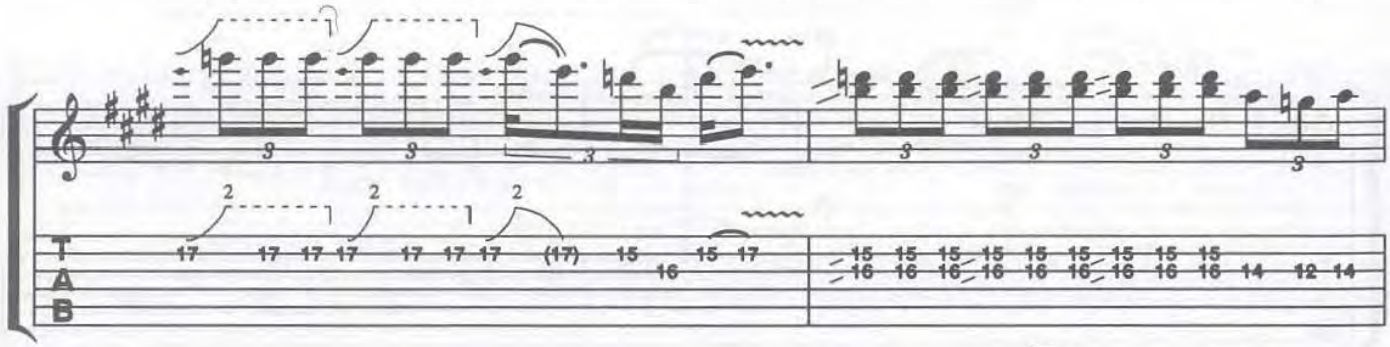


22

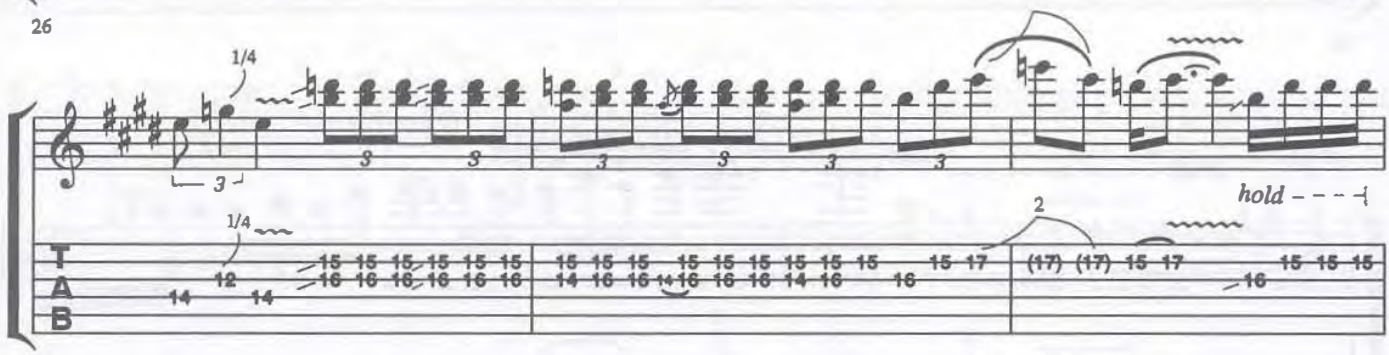


24

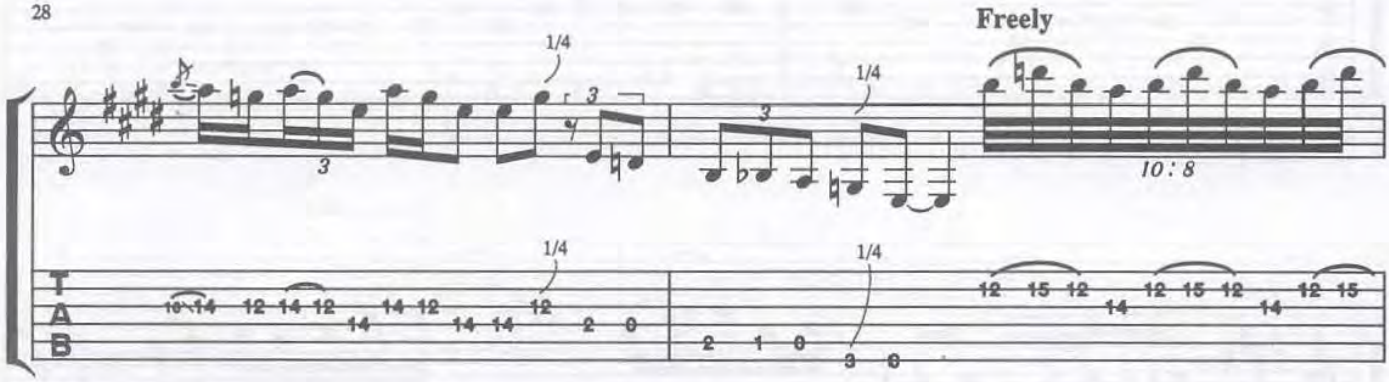
*"Woman tone".



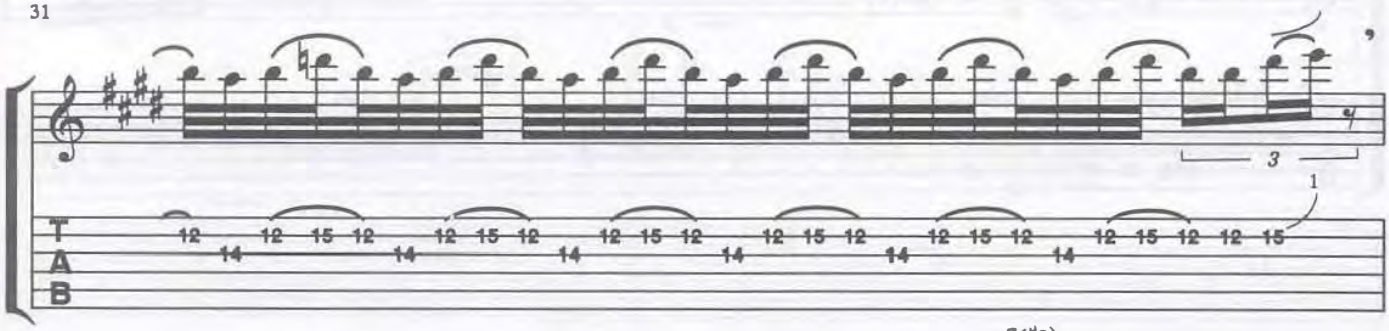
26



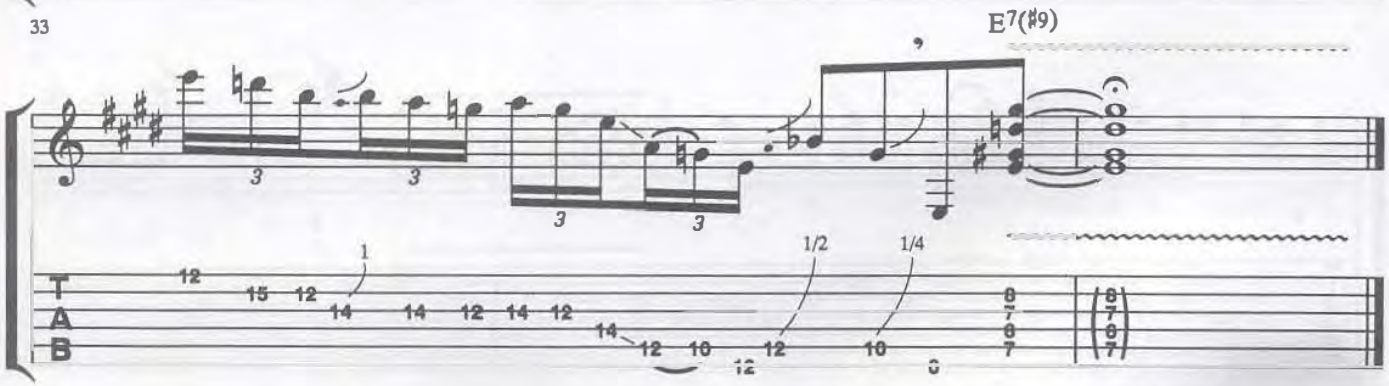
28



31



33

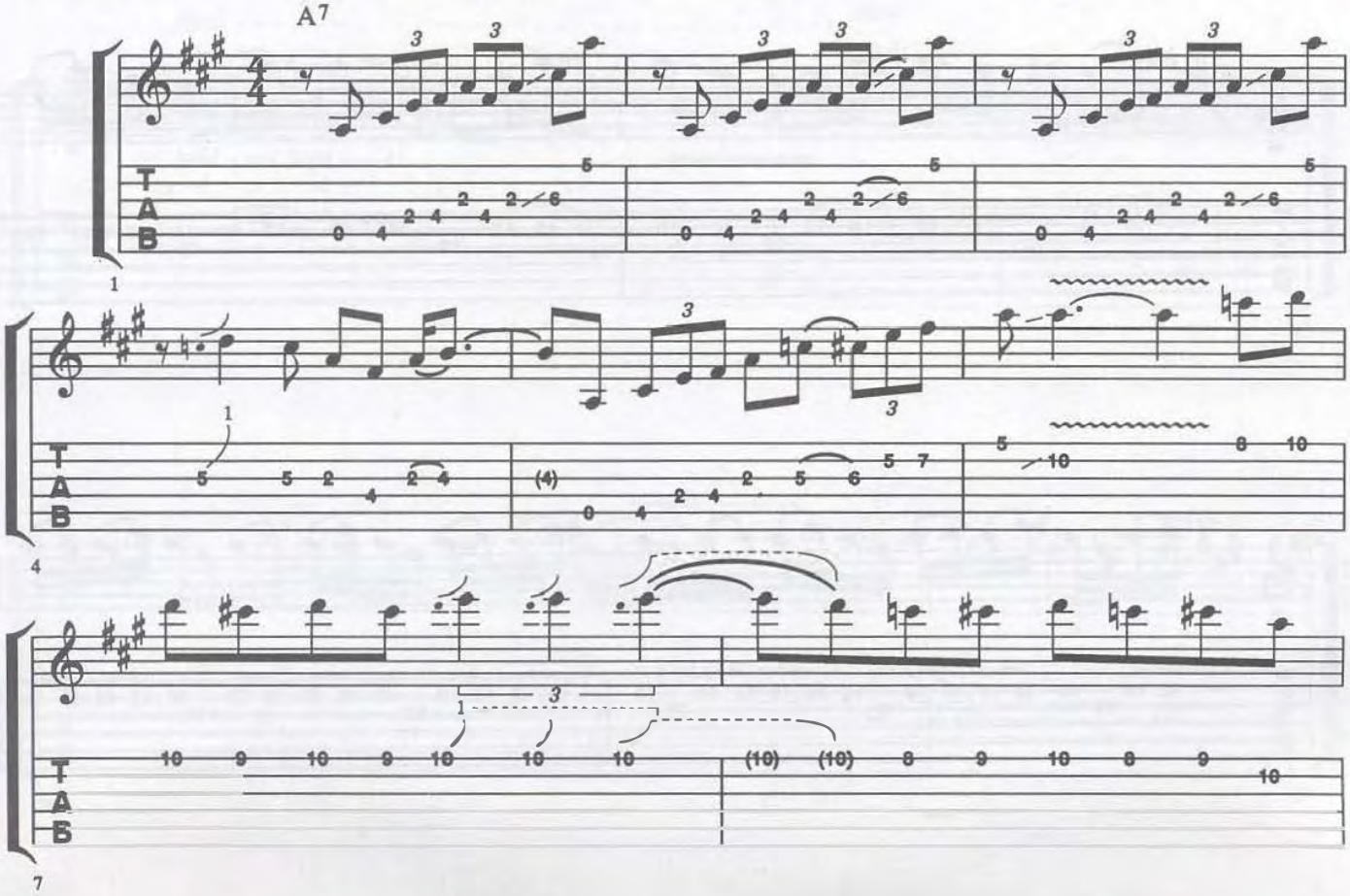


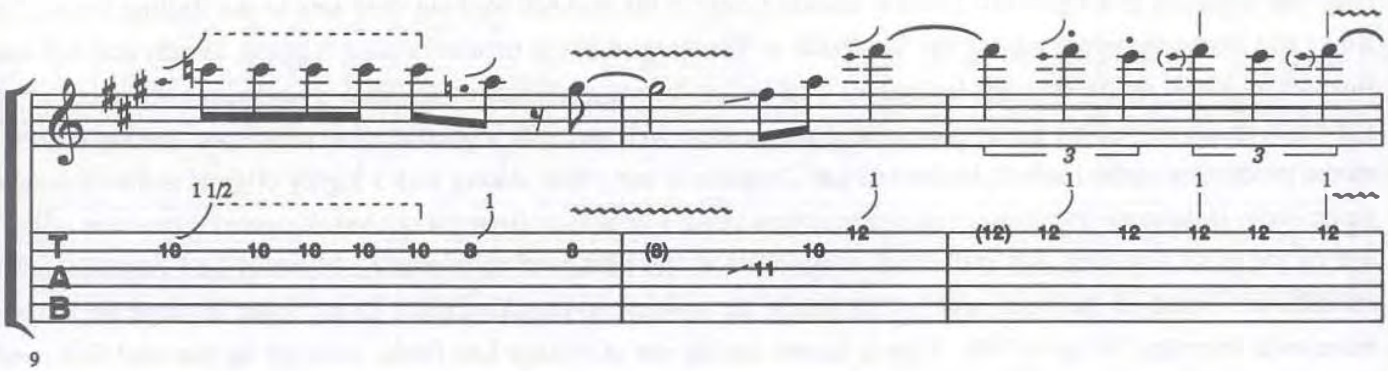
34

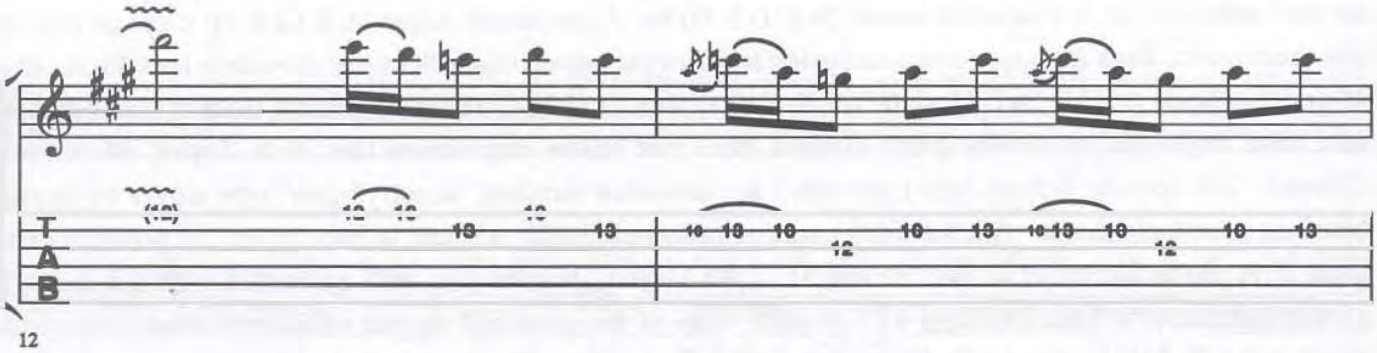
Jimmy Page

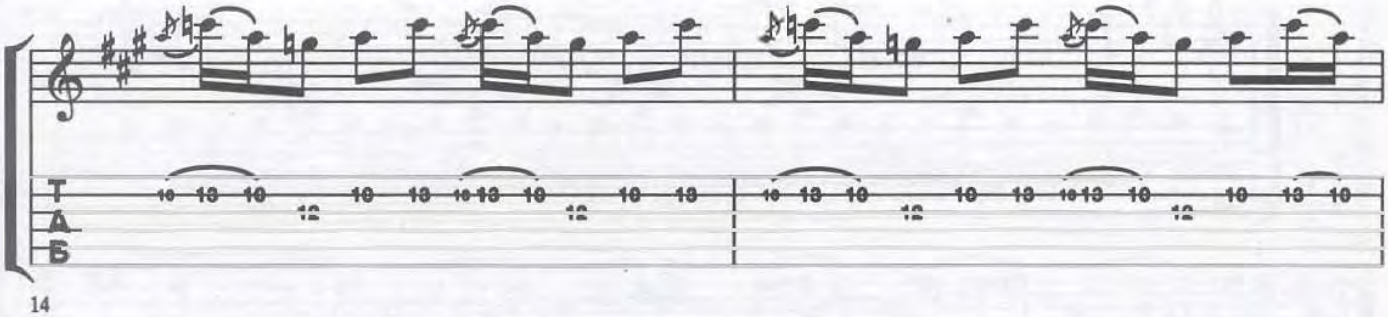
Page was regarded as a top-notch London session player in the mid-60s backing such acts as the Rolling Stones, The Kinks and Donovan before joining the Yardbirds as their bassist. After then switching to guitar, Jimmy and Jeff Beck shared lead guitar responsibilities for a short time before the group disbanded in 1968. Page's love of American pop and blues music served his guitar playing and songwriting well and with a good amount of interest and experience in record production under his belt, he formed Led Zeppelin in late 1968. Along with a highly original and well-rounded guitar style, influenced by blues, country and international folk music, Jimmy Page has the grand distinction of being one of the most respected and influential songwriters in the history of rock music. Much of Led Zeppelin's early material was based on the blues, and in their hands, the now hyper-amplified blues forms began to shape the future of blues/rock from the UK to the US. Page is known for his use of vintage Les Pauls, although he has used Telecasters (i.e. all of Led Zeppelin I and the solo on Stairway to Heaven), Dan Electro models and Stratocasters.

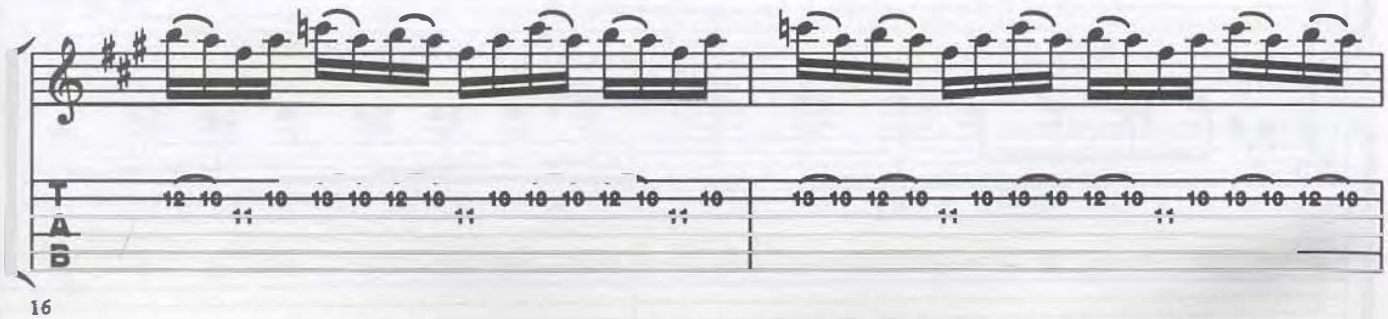
This solo is played over a famous Led Zeppelin vamp in A which leans towards a bluesy A7 sound. The guts of the solo are based on A pentatonic minor (A C D E G) but A pentatonic major (A B C♯ E F♯) plays an important role throughout. Page is happy to rock out using standard pentatonic minor licks like the one in bars 33-36, 42 and 43 or Blues Scale (A C D D♯ E G) stuff like the line in bars 23 and 24. However, Jimmy tends to throw in a good deal more major-quality-country-guitar-inspired ideas than fellow Englishmen like Beck, Taylor, Blackmore or Gilmour. The opening licks in bars 1 through 5 are somewhat standard "country/blues" type moves for example, based on pentatonic major. Another pure usage of pentatonic major is found in bars 28 and 29 before switching gears to A pentatonic minor in bars 30 and 31. Like Clapton, Page is very well acquainted with this sort of the phrase that occurs in bars 7 through 11. A quick study of the notes will show a balance of stress on pentatonic minor notes C♮ (♭3), D (4) and G♮ (♭7) and pentatonic major notes C♯ (♮3) and F♯ (6). Displaying the pentatonic major/minor relationship even more succinctly is a lick that is a classic Page logo in bars 16 and 17. The notes B-A-F♯-A represents pentatonic major while the notes C♮ and A suggest pentatonic minor.

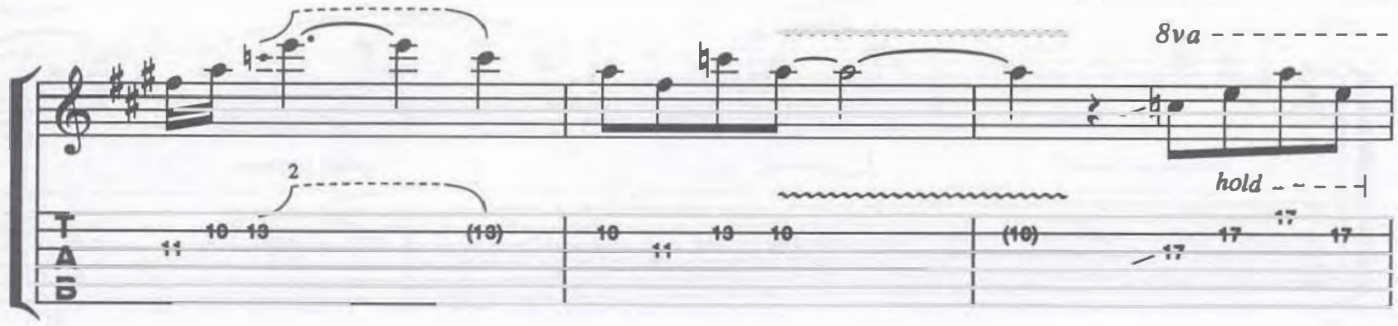



9

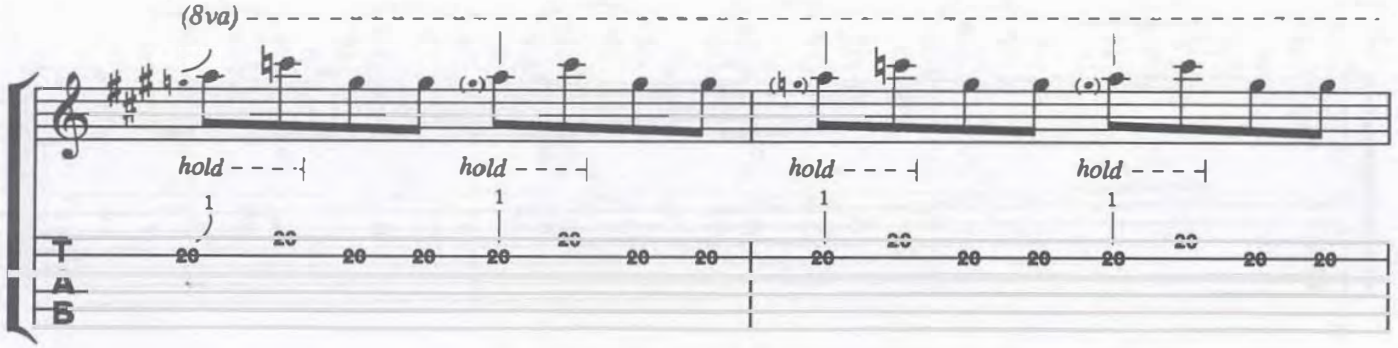

12


14

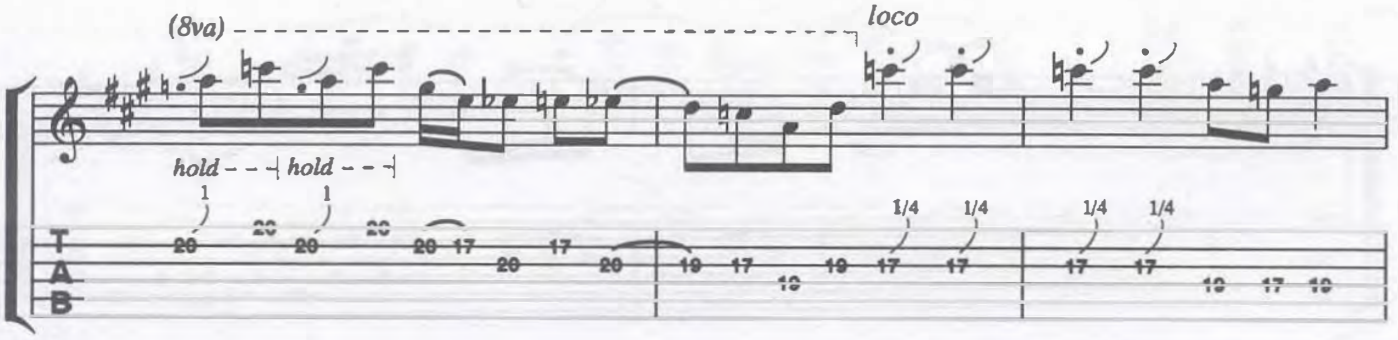

16


8va
hold
T
A
Б

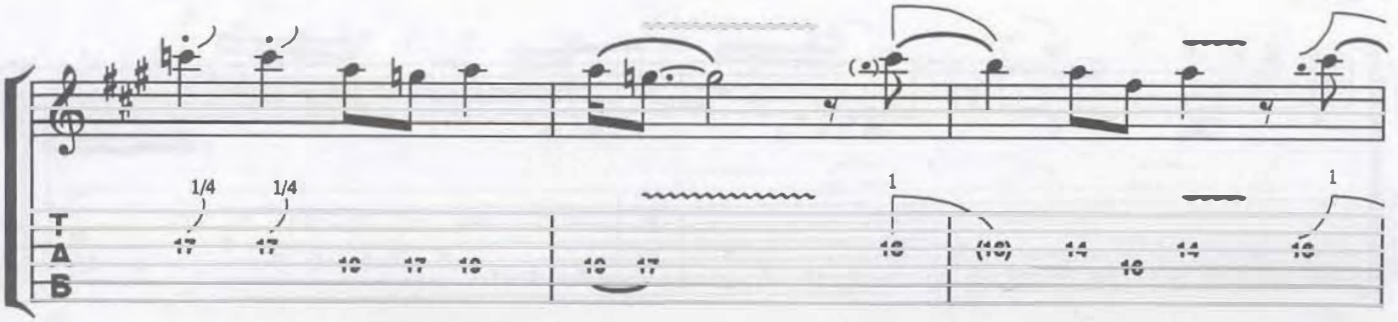
18


(8va)
hold
hold
hold
hold
T
A
Б

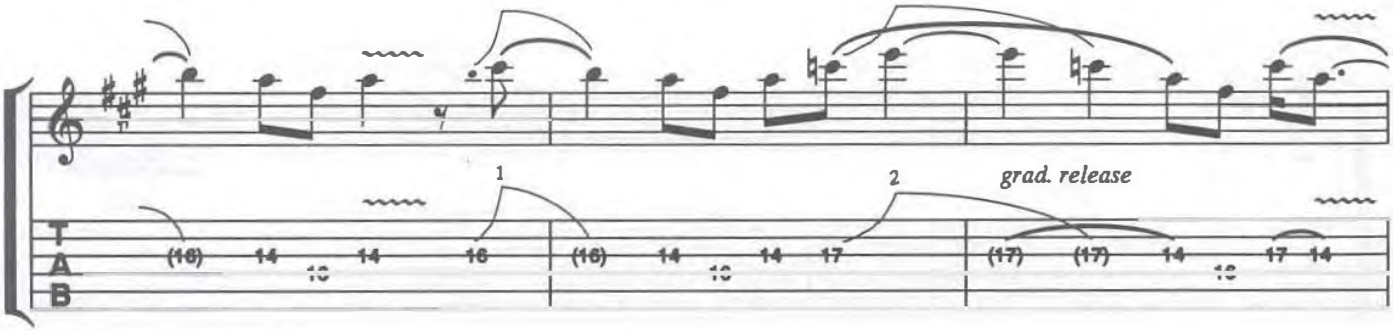
21


(8va)
loco
hold
hold
T
A
B

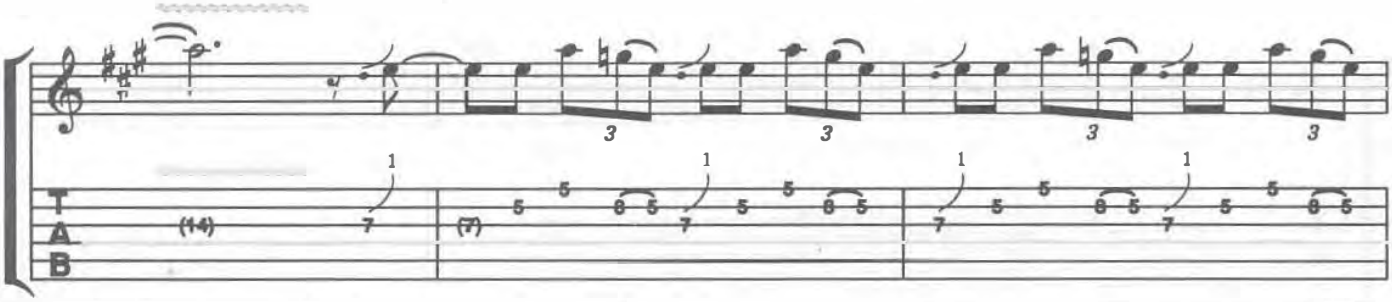
23


T
A
Б

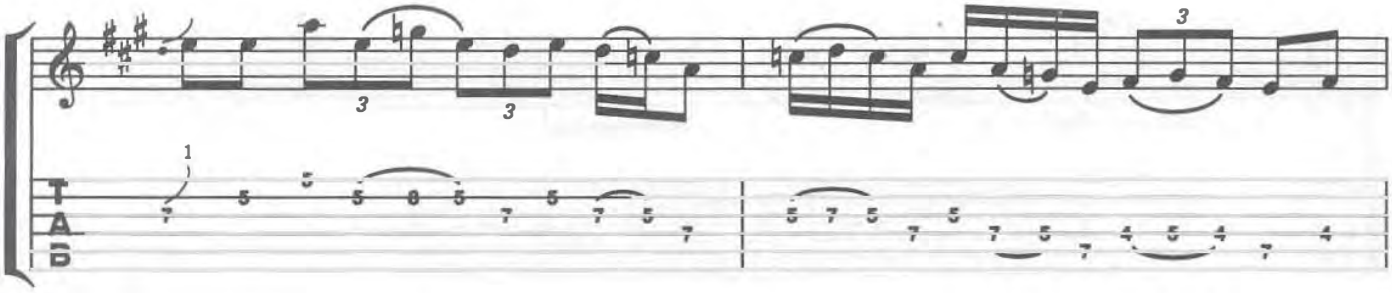
26



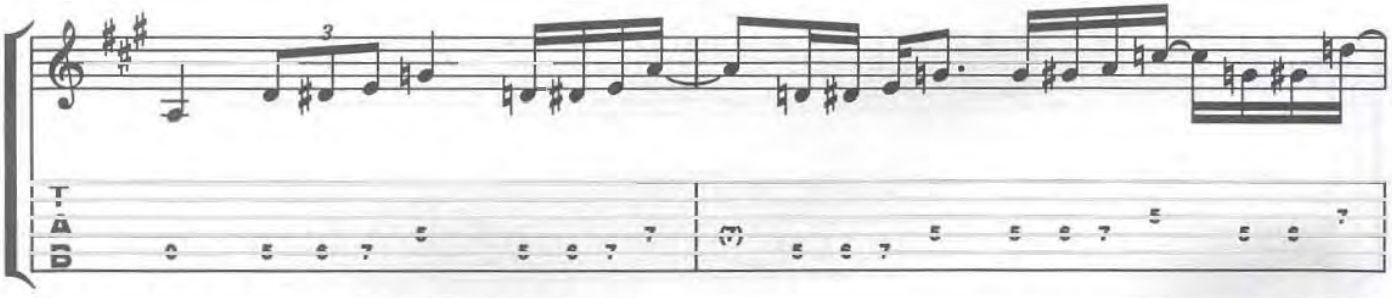
29



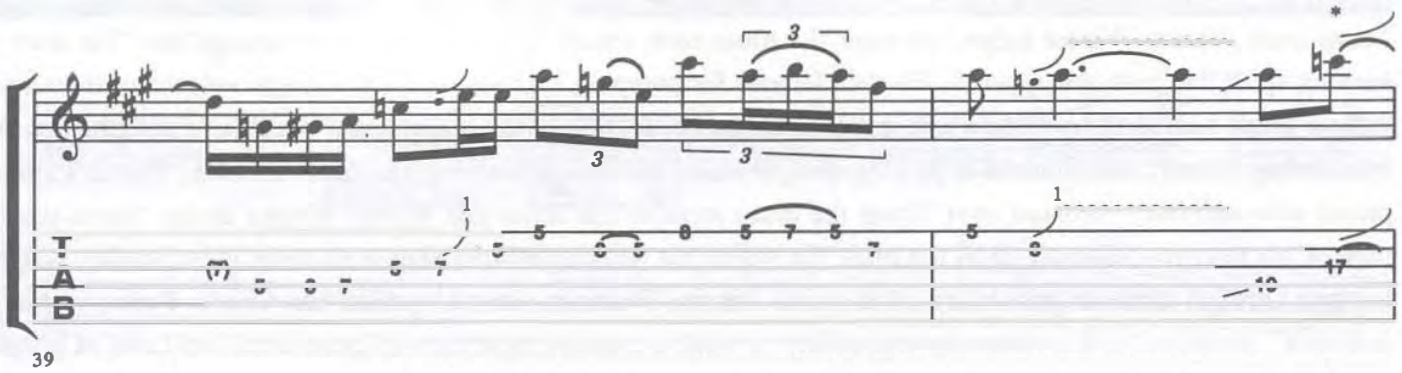
32

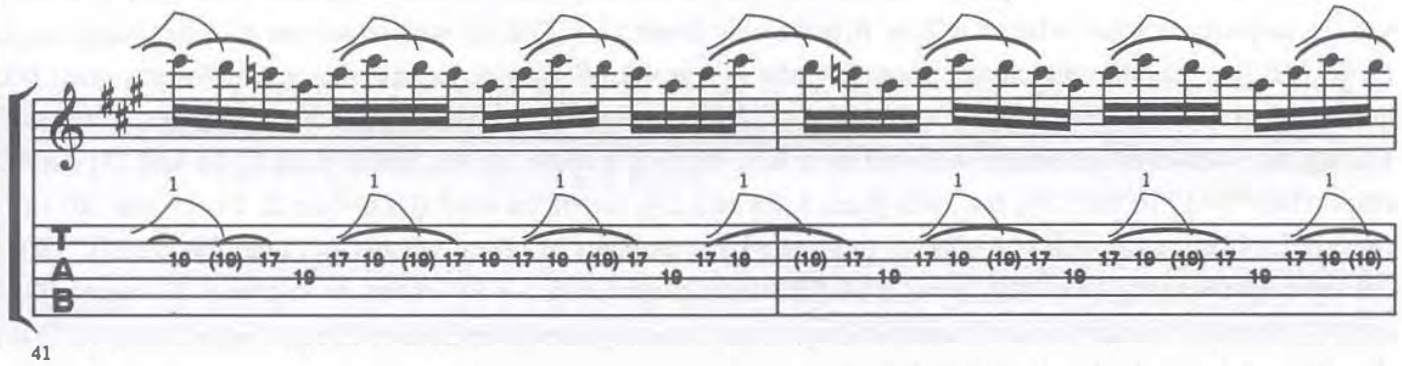


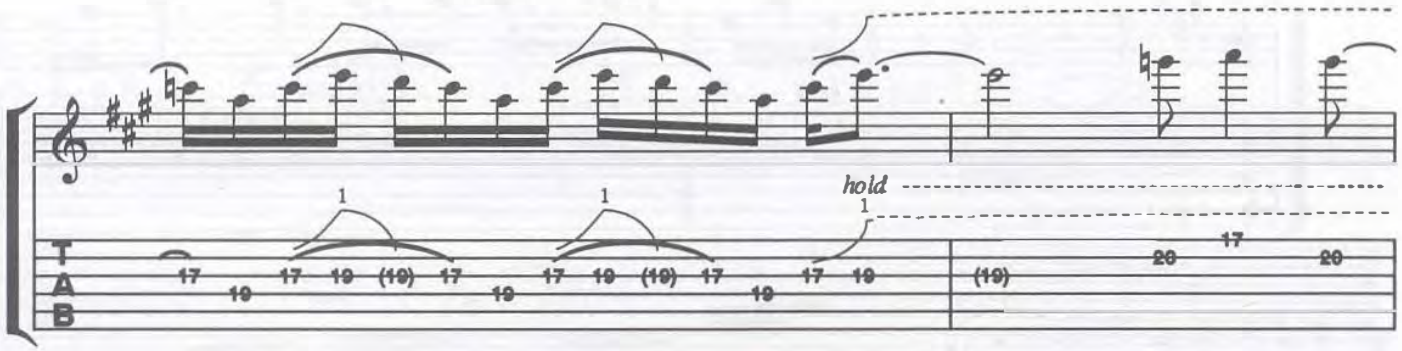
35

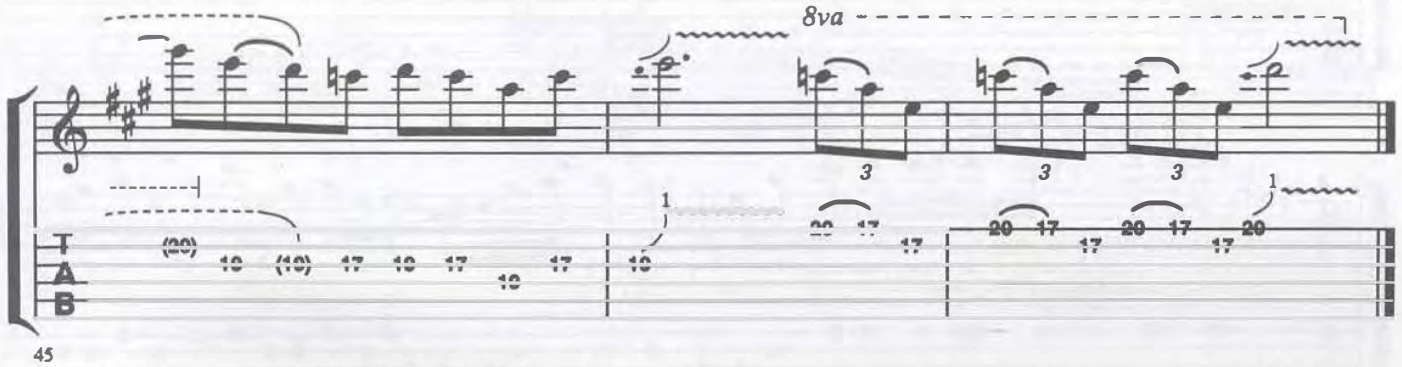


37









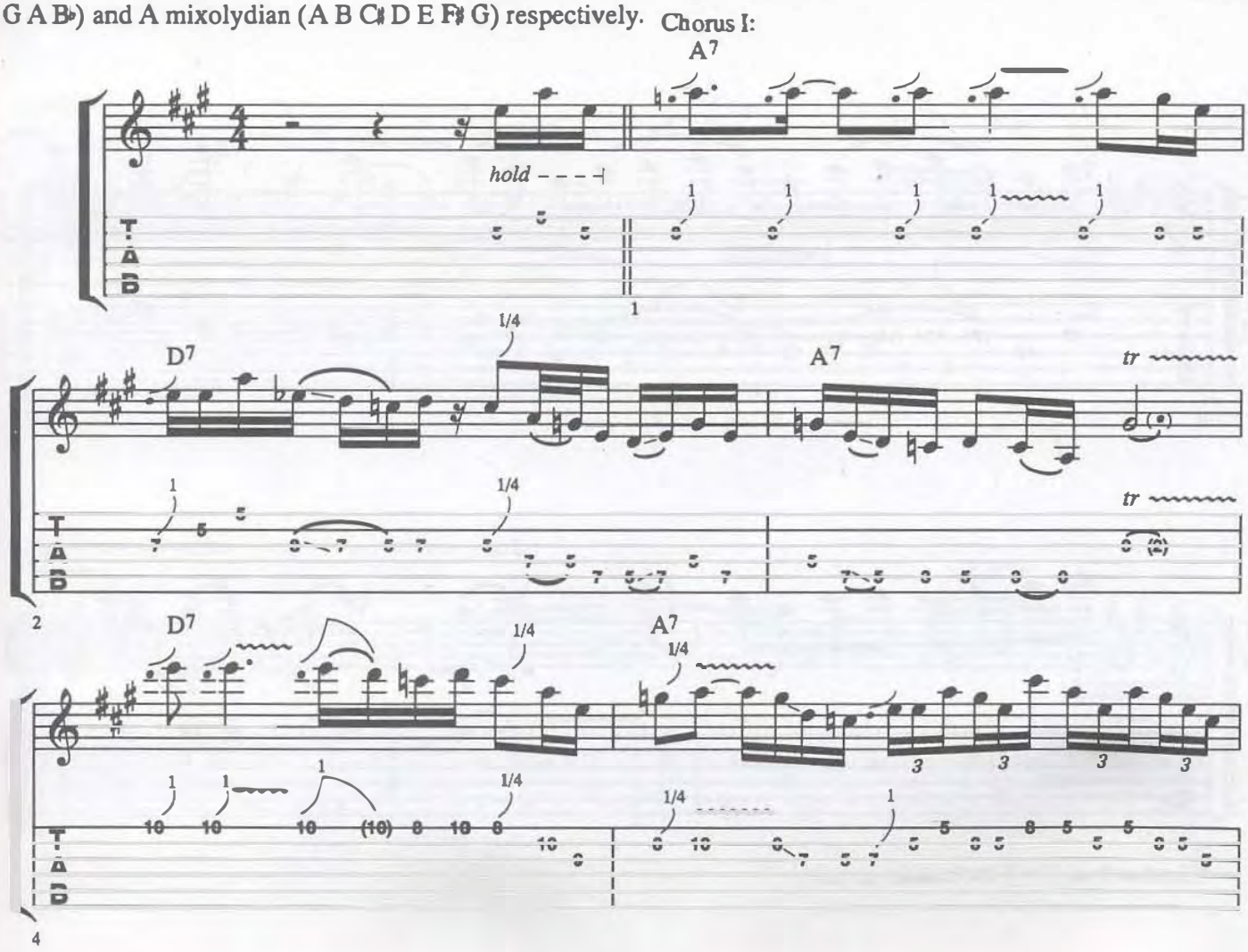
*Hammer from C to E and bend immediately.

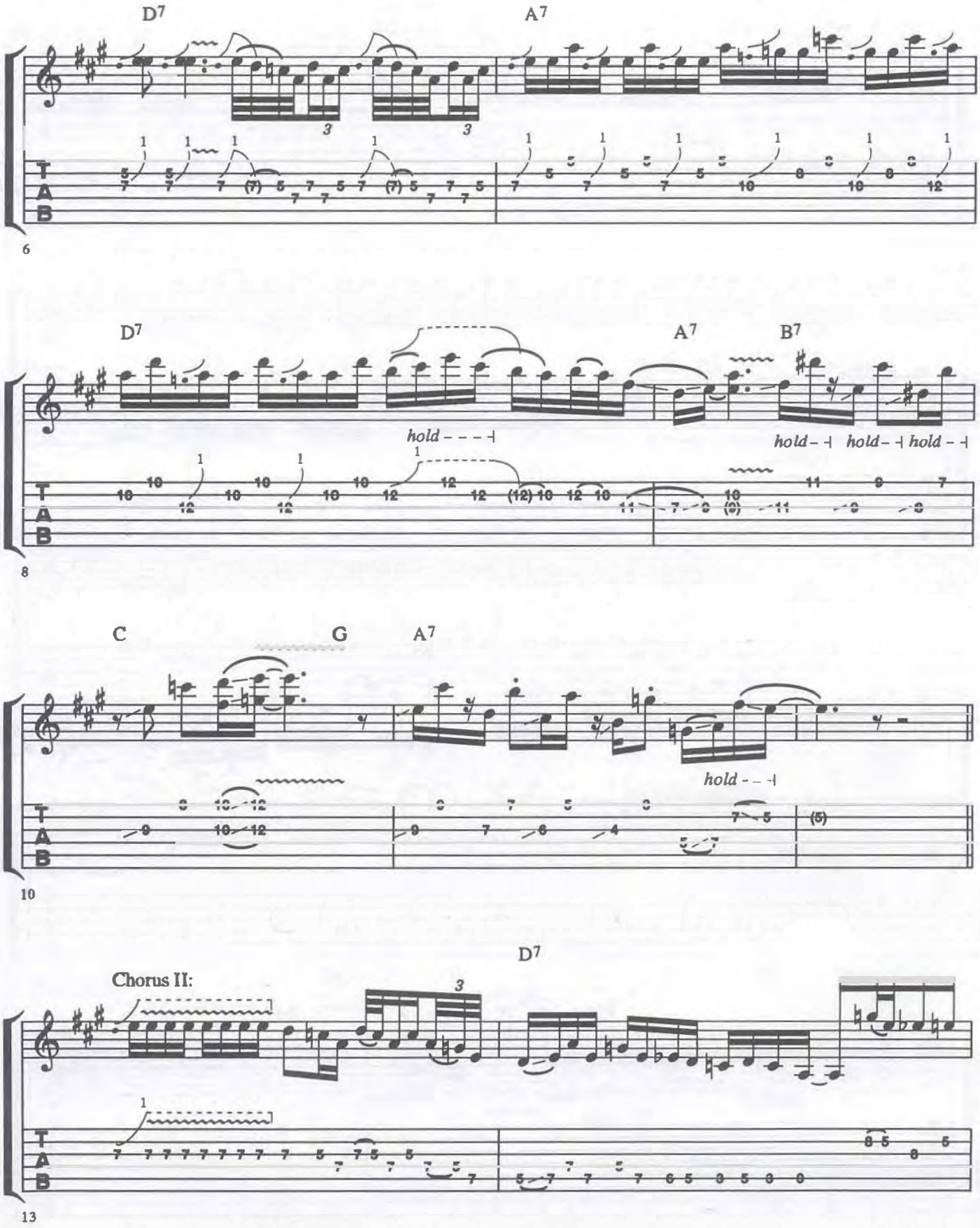
Johnny Winter

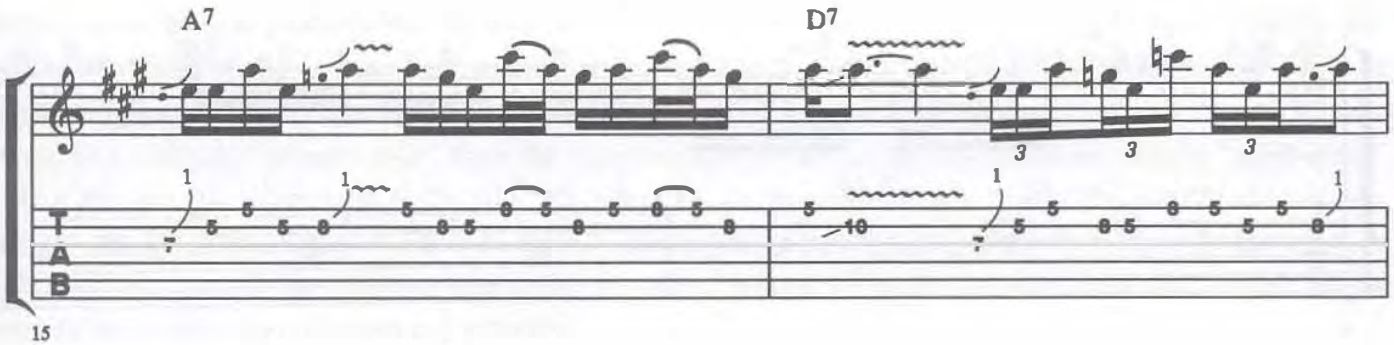
Texas-born Johnny Winter helped pioneer the blues/rock sound from the mid '60s through the '70s with a burning spirit that was unstoppable. He was famous for pumping rock and roll attitude and voluminousness into vintage blues numbers, most often with his Firebird guitar, scaring guitar players with his great musicianship. At this writing, Johnny has returned to playing straight ahead blues—maintaining a style all his own. This is a guitar player who has truly "crossed over" from the blues roots of his debut and second albums to the "arena-sized" rock of his next few albums, up to the mid-'70s where his working relationship with blues great Muddy Waters brought him full circle to pure blues once again. Johnny Winter is something like "the Charlie Parker of blues and rock" in respect to his virtuosity and ability to work a massive repertoire of great licks and turns of phrase into infinite combinations that suit any situation.

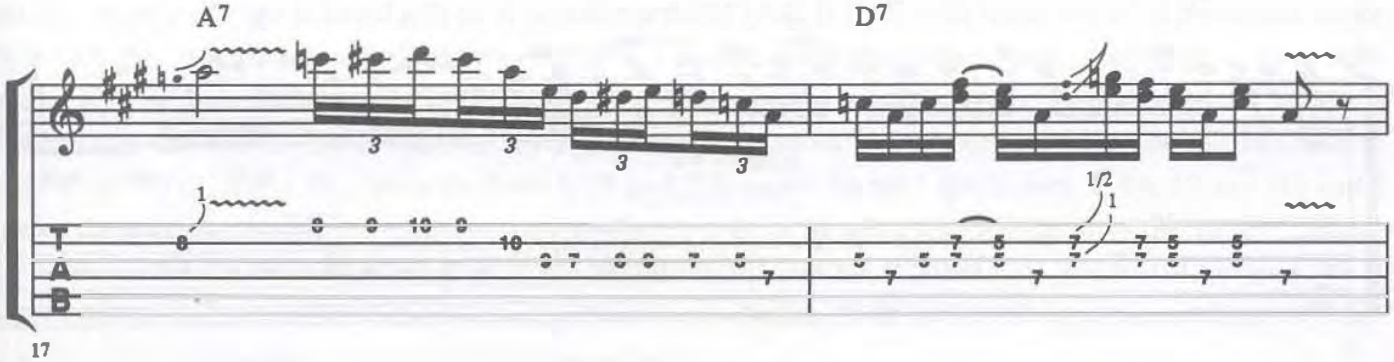
Johnny has a wicked one-two-punch of pentatonic minor and major as his main weapons. This vamp is set in A and the majority of what is heard will be A pentatonic minor (A C D E G) with lesser use of A pentatonic major (A B C♯ E F♯). As this solo clearly shows, Winter is a prolific Form I pentatonic minor user—many great licks are found in 5th and 17th position comprised of the Form I notes, unadulterated. Key elements of Johnny's soloing style are constant bends followed by a fast, stinging vibrato, unison bends (bars 6, 34 and 35) double-stops (bars 9-11, 18 and 27), fast trills (bars 3, 24 and 25), use of the ♯4/♭5 (D♯/E♭-bars 2, 14, 17 and 20) and a passion for blazing through fast phrases that cram large numbers of notes together (all over the place!). Check out the major tonality ideas like in bar 8 (A pentatonic major) over the D7 chord, or in bars 9-11, where B7, C and A7 chords are fleshed out with double-stops from B mixolydian (B C♯ D♯ E F♯ G♯ A), C mixolydian (C D E F G A B♭) and A mixolydian (A B C♯ D E F♯ G) respectively.

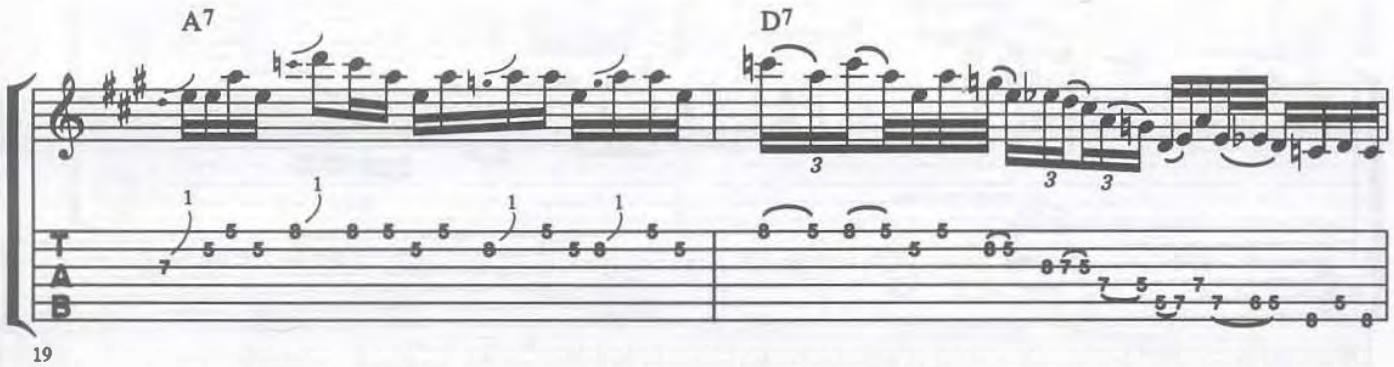
Chorus I:

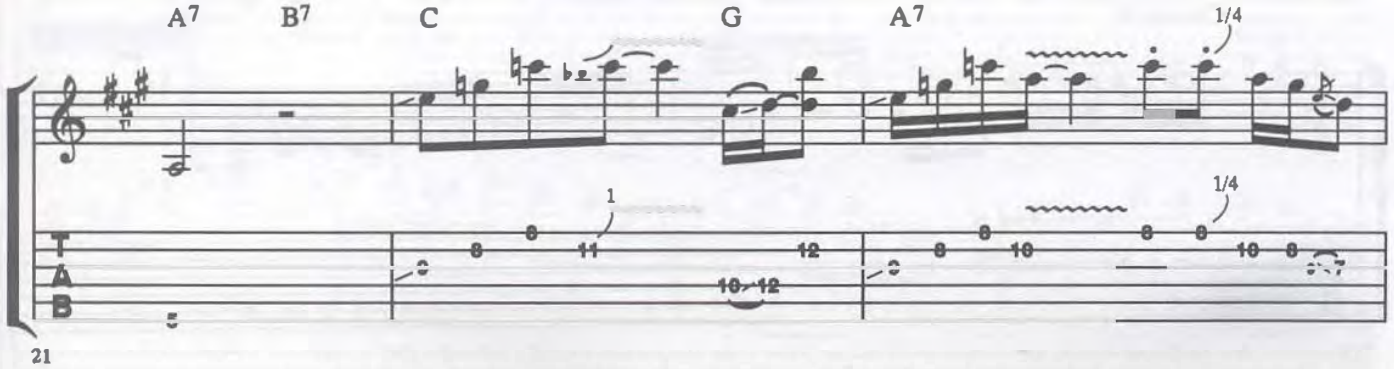


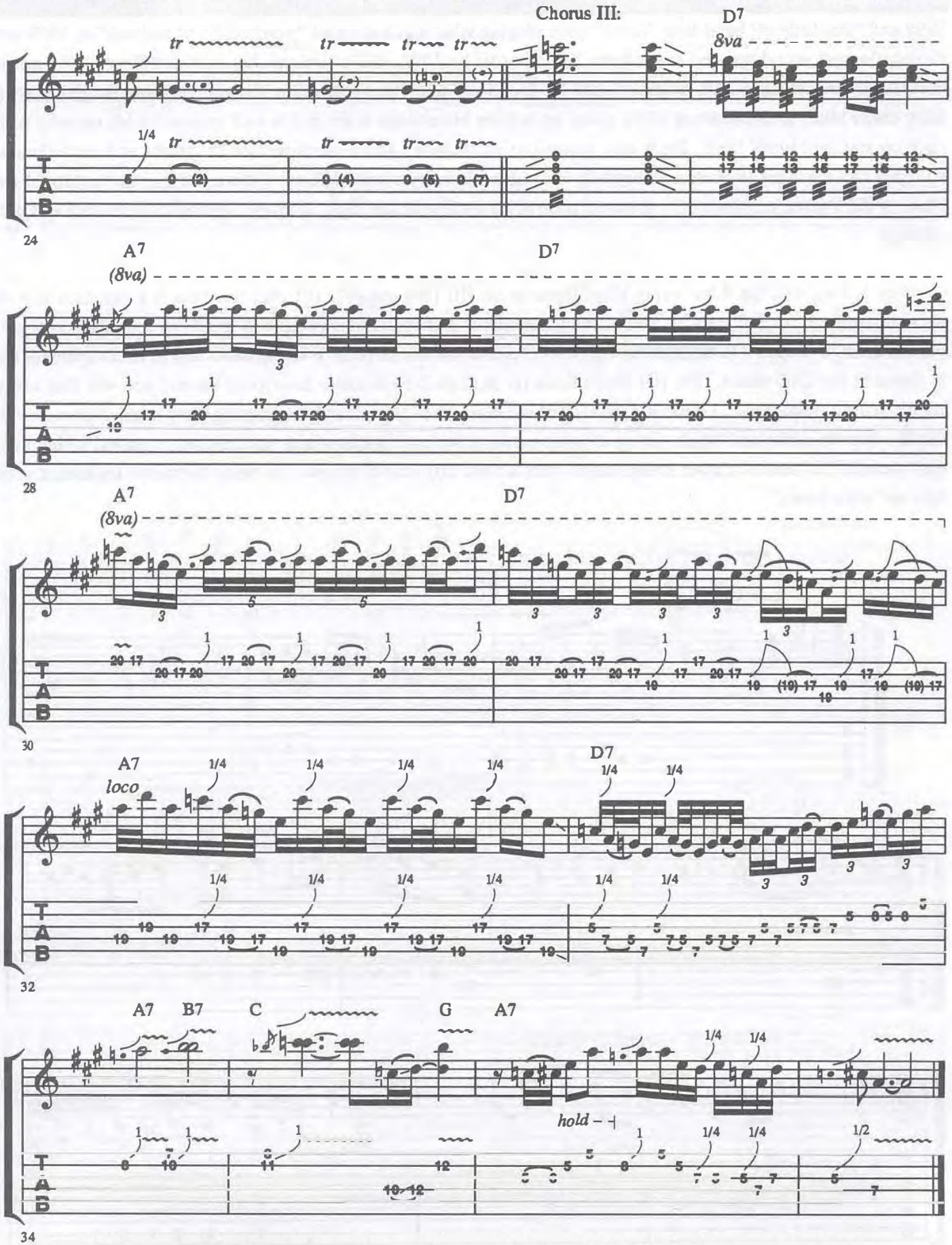

D7
A7
6
D7
A7
B7
hold
hold
hold
hold
8
C
G
A7
hold
10
Chorus II:
D7
13


A7
D7
15


A7
D7
17


A7
D7
19

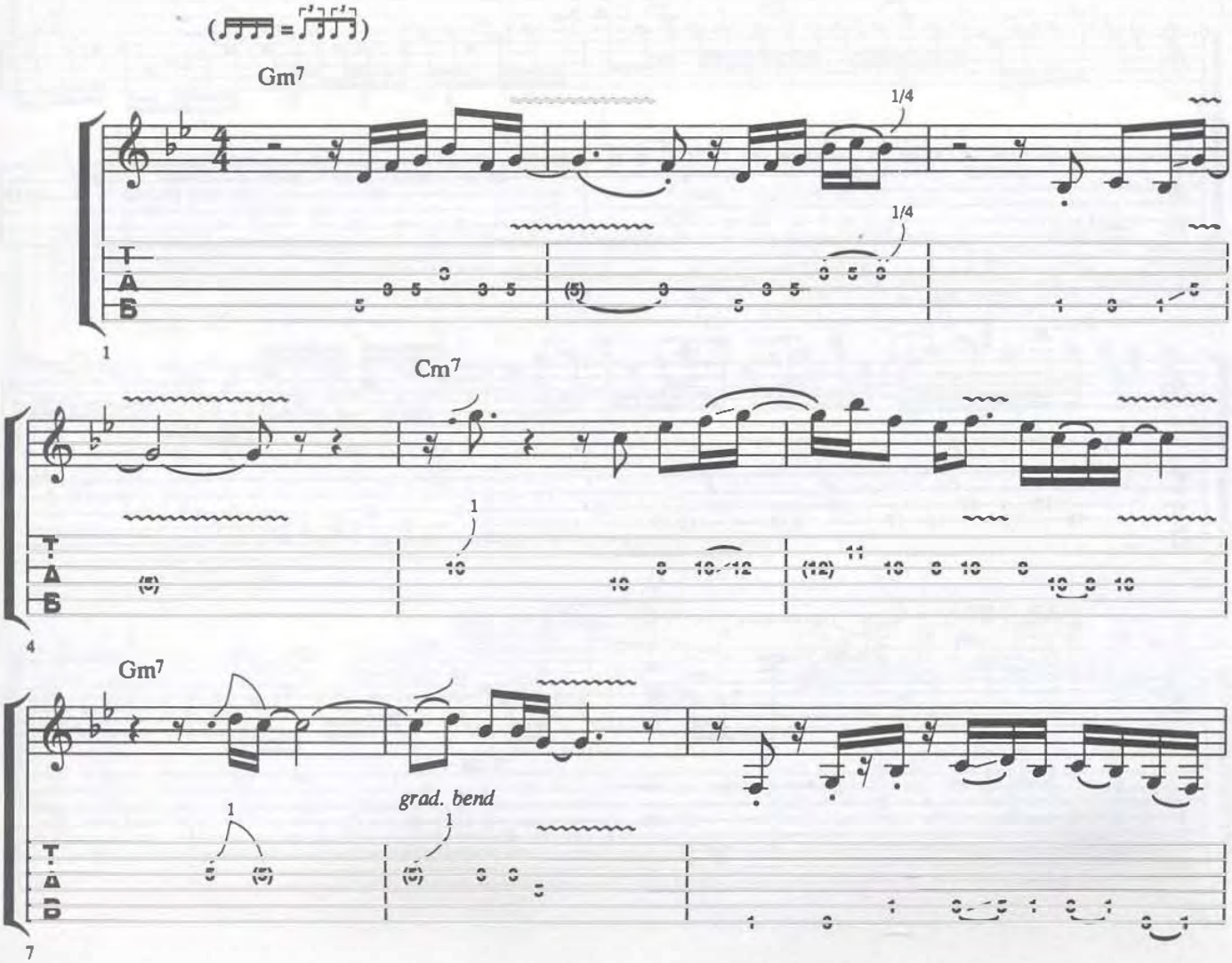

A7
B7
C
G
A7
21

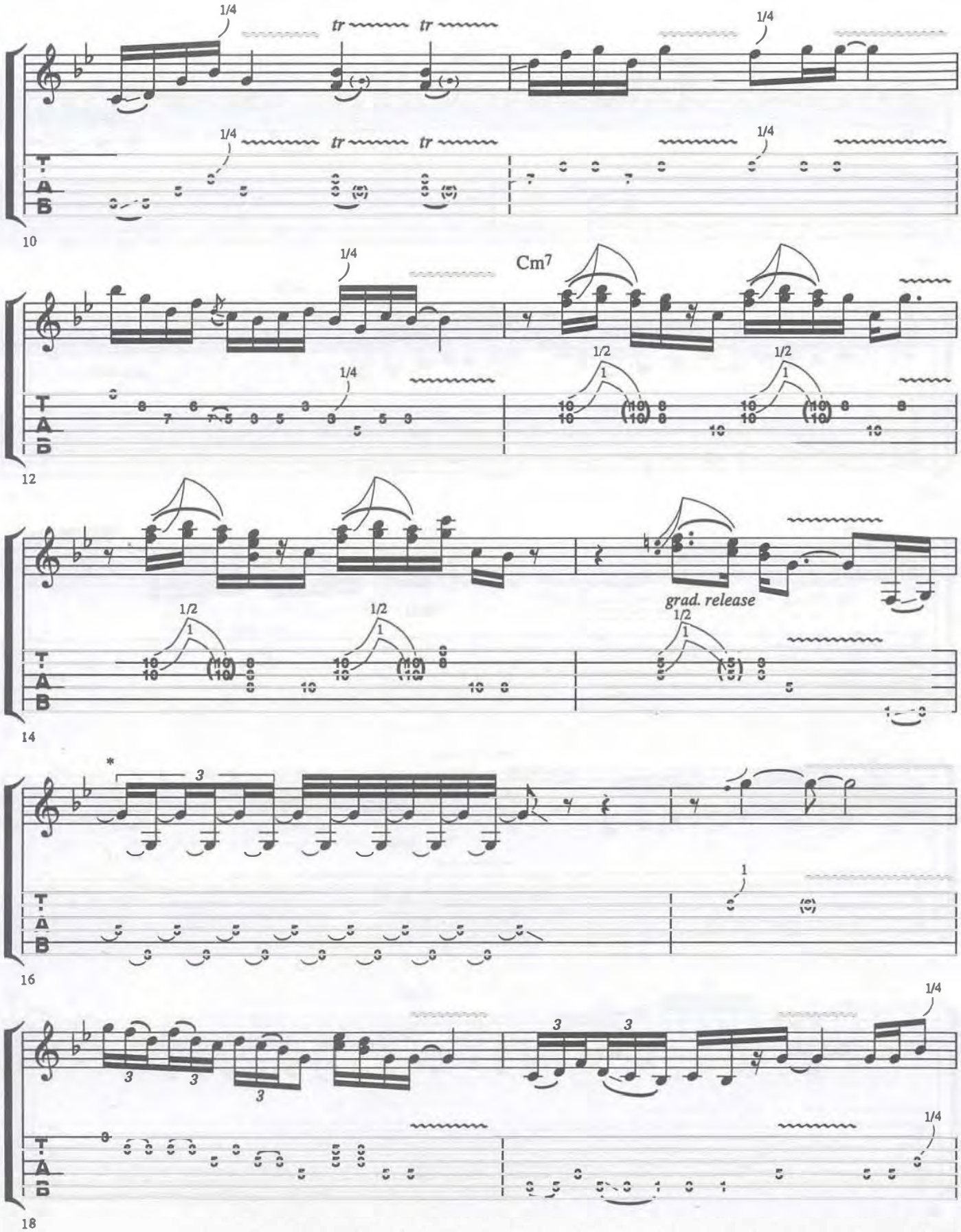

Chorus III:
D7
8va
tr
1/4
24
A7
(8va)
D7
28
A7
(8va)
D7
30
A7
loco
D7
1/4
32
A7
B7
C
G
A7
hold
1/2
34

Billy Gibbons (of ZZ Top)

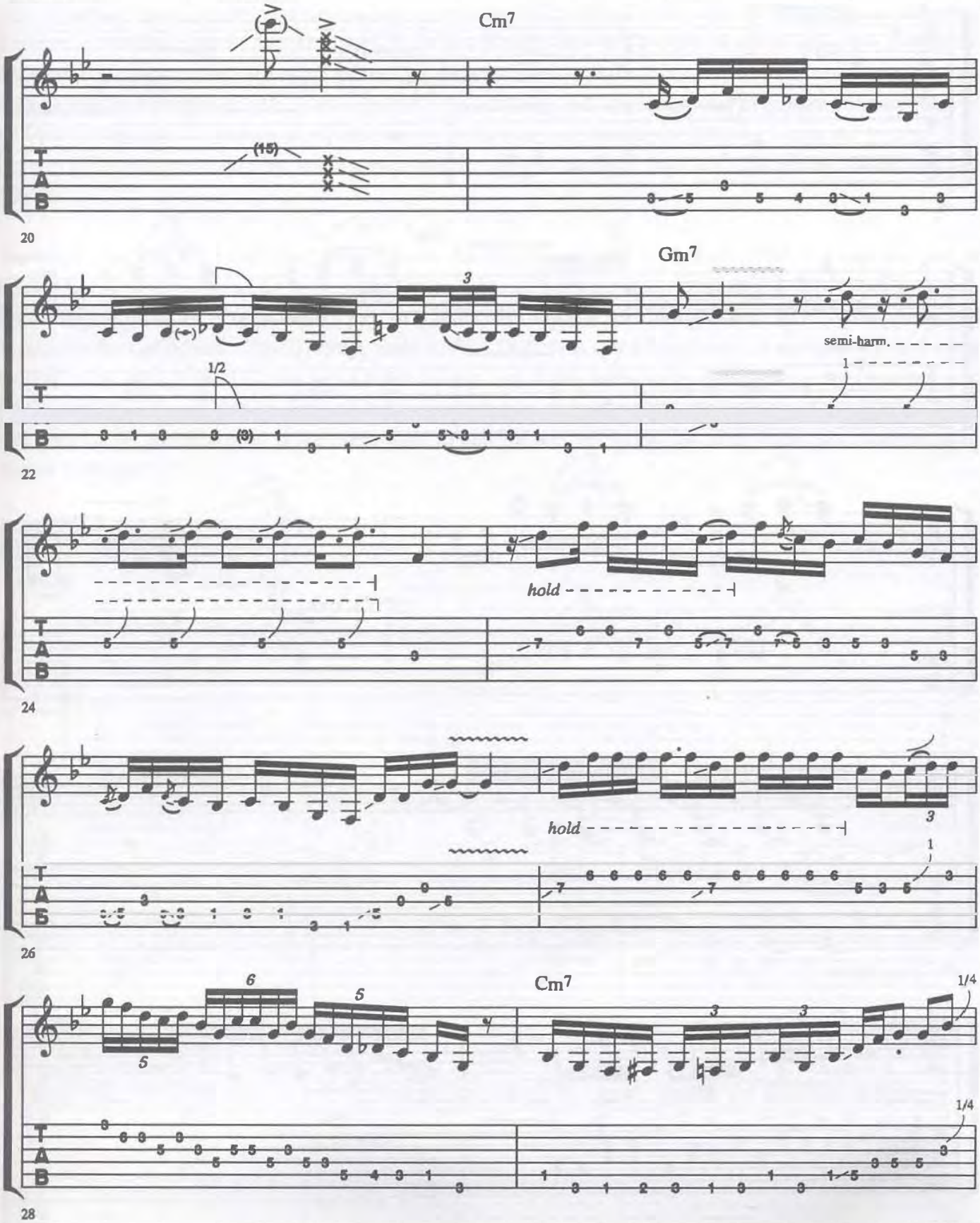
Billy and "that little ol' band from Texas" were playing what was known as "psychedelic blues/rock" in 1969 and their colloquial sound reached beyond the Texas border by 1972. Billy Gibbons has been handling all the guitar business in the band since its inception with his broad and juicy tone that needs no help in filling the guitar spot. Billy chose blues as the bedrock of his guitar style from his teenage years and is well known for his crunchy rock slant on standard blues feels. He is also reputed as an authority and owner/operator of guitars and amplifiers of all types and manages to summon heavenly tone from his many combinations. Gibbons brings the feeling of the blues to ZZ's often commercially oriented pop-rock appeal with his tasty, reserved approach to soloing and part playing.

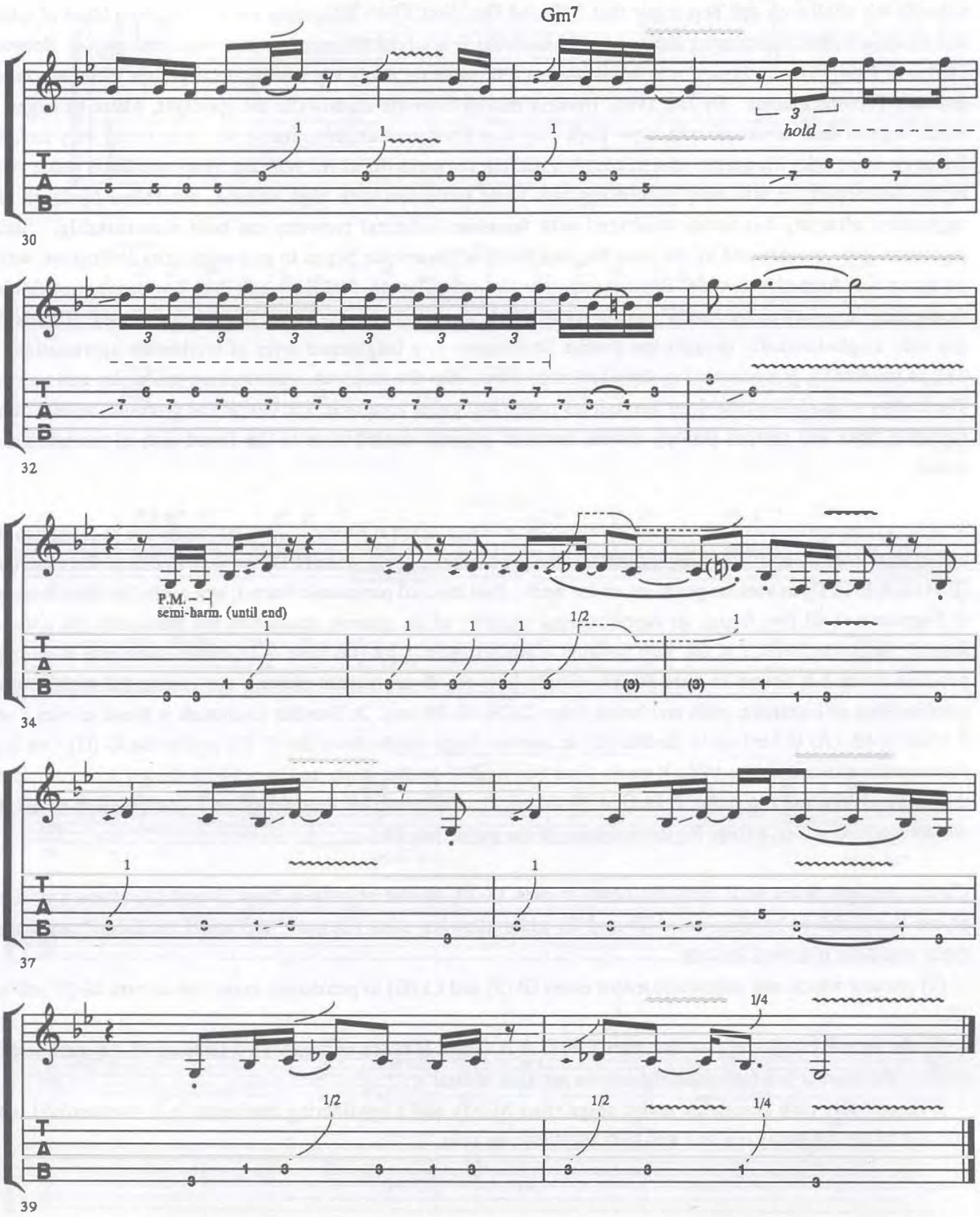
The key is Gm, and the 8-bar vamp leans towards the ♭III (B♭) and ♭VII (F) chords. This is a common sort of stomping ground for Billy, as he favors using pentatonic minor (G, in this case: G B♭ C D F) for the most part. For the change to the IV (Cm7) chord, a shift to C pentatonic minor (C E♭ F G B♭) is worked in to compliment the E♭ found in the Cm7 chord. The (G) Blues Scale (G B♭ C D♭ D F) is also a favorite of his and you will find many ♭5s (D♭s) used throughout. Gibbons gets a lot of mileage out of few notes by accenting tasty turns of phrase with subtle vibratos, slides and bends. Integral to his personal style are legato slides and held notes played without the pick (bars 25, 27 and 32), open string usage (bars 23 and 26) and, of course, his pinch harmonic trademark seen here as "semi-harm."





*Hammer to notes without picking.


Cm7
(15)
20
Gm7
semi-harm.
1/2
22
hold
24
hold
26
Cm7
1/4
28


Gm7
hold
P.M.
semi-harm. (until end)
30
32
34
37
39

Jimi Hendrix

He may be the most influential electric guitarist that ever lived. Although his music and playing are most strongly felt in all rock and pop music that followed him, Jimi's own influences were in the deep blues of artists like Muddy Waters and later by rhythm and blues—which is where his career as a professional began. Between 1961 and 1966, "Jimmy James" was in demand as a sideman for many top touring R&B groups including James Brown's Famous Flames. By late 1966, Hendrix moved from the shadows to the spotlight, where he began to attract a great deal of attention in New York City as a front man-singer-guitarist who was doing very naughty things on stage with his guitar—not to mention playing the pants off of it. With his blues and R&B guitar roots highly developed, he was busy pioneering new sonic territories with high volume, controlled feedback and aggressive whammy bar antics combined with fearsome technical prowess and bold showmanship. Jimi's reputation grew quickly and by the time the Jimi Hendrix Experience began to gain popularity in England where the group was formed, renowned English guitarists like Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck and Pete Townsend were finding themselves blown away by Jimi's playing style, which was so obviously rooted in American blues. This is the guy who single-handedly brought the Fender Stratocaster to a heightened level of worldwide appreciation, as well as pioneering groundbreaking exploitation of effects like the wah wah, octavia, ring modulator and univibe. The feeling of the blues runs deep through his music and guitar approach, and beside the profound impact of his signature licks and rhythm playing towers Hendrix' gigantic contribution to the foundation of the blues/rock sound.

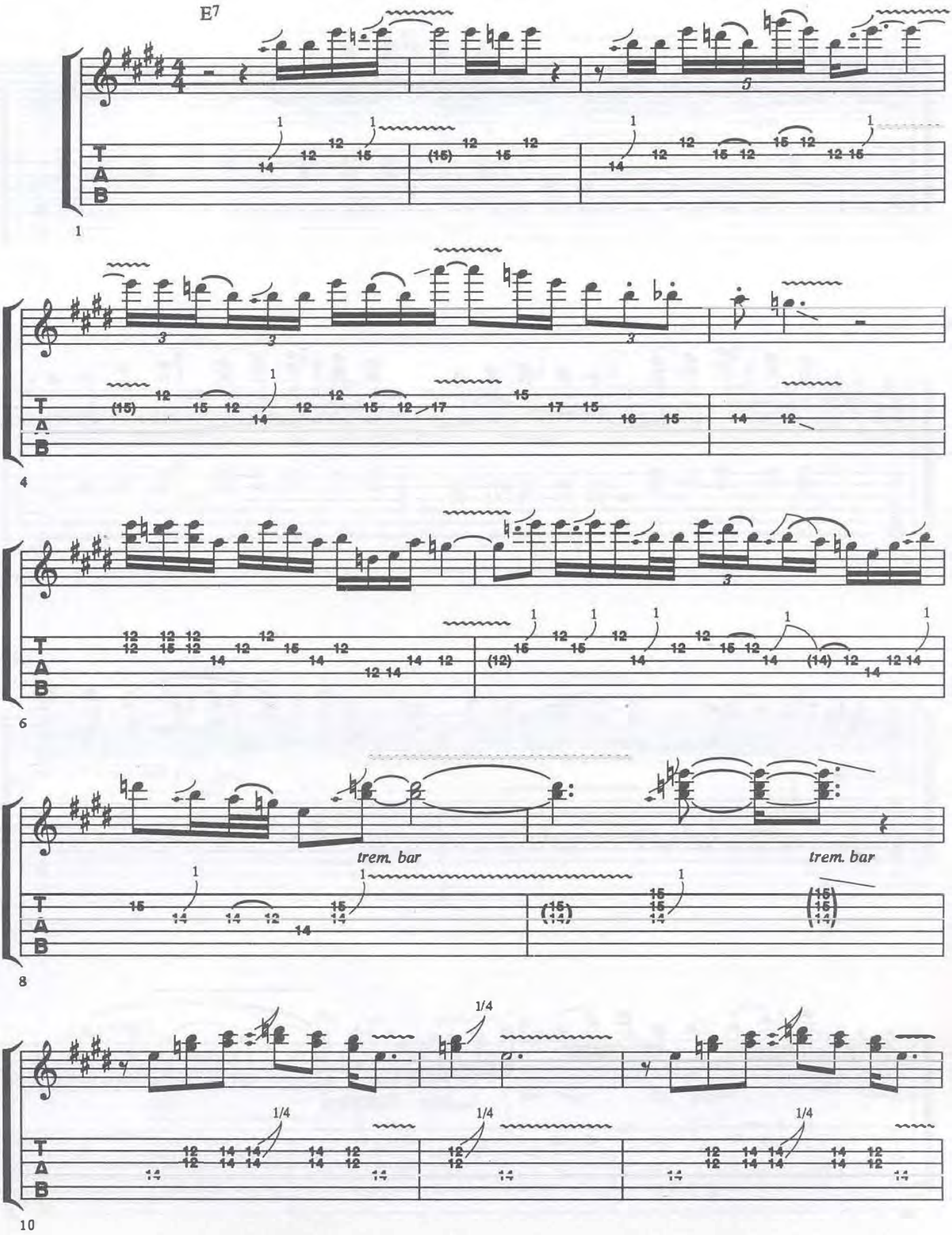
This funky blues vamp in E is the perfect set-up for a library of great Hendrix licks that make use of E pentatonic minor (E G A B D) and major (E F♯ G♯ B C♯), the E blues scale (E G A A♯/B♭ D), as well as bits of E mixolydian (E F♯ G♯ A B C♯ D) in various positions of the neck. Jimi favored pentatonic Form I, and while he often ventured to fragments of all five forms, an overwhelming majority of his greatest statements are made with the notes of form I. In E, the Form I at the 12th position is milked quite a lot (i.e. bars 6-24) while some use of an open position Form I is found in bars 36-39. Study how the E pentatonic phrases are connected with smooth combinations of hammers, pulls and bends (bars 22-24, 43-50, etc). A Hendrix trademark is found in bars 8 and 9 where a 4th (A) is bent up to the 5th (B) as another finger holds down the ♭7 (D) and/or the ♭3 (G). At high volumes this can sound like a Mack truck. Jimi was fond of double-stops, and bars 14-16 show a series of triplets that collectively use the notes E F♯ G A B♭ B and D, which can be thought of as a combination of all the aforementioned scales, except for the inclusion of the major 3rd, G♯.

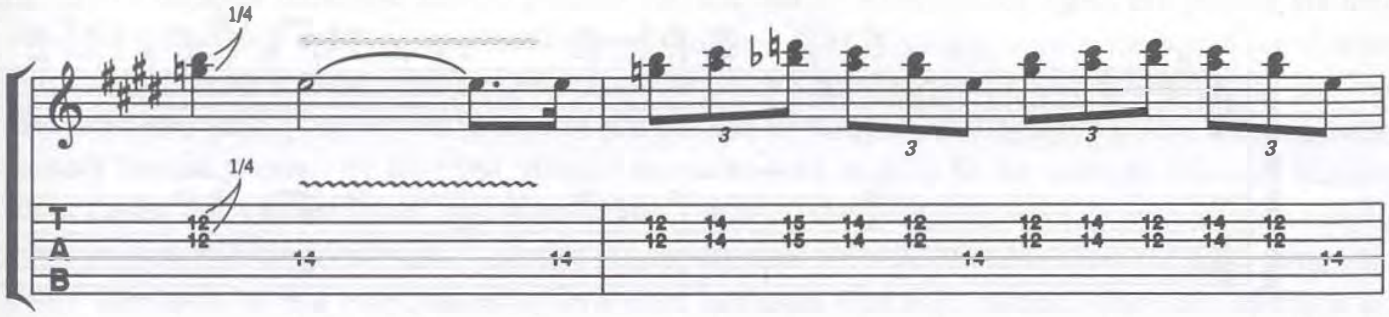
Classic Hendrix blues scale licks are heard in bars 18-20, 48 and notably in bars 23 and 24, where a difficult phrase that involves bending notes (D and G) while allowing other notes to "slip under the finger" are found. Other stand-out moments include:

(1) phrases which add pentatonic major notes G♯ (3) and C♯ (G) to pentatonic minor (as in bars 26-27 and bar 45);

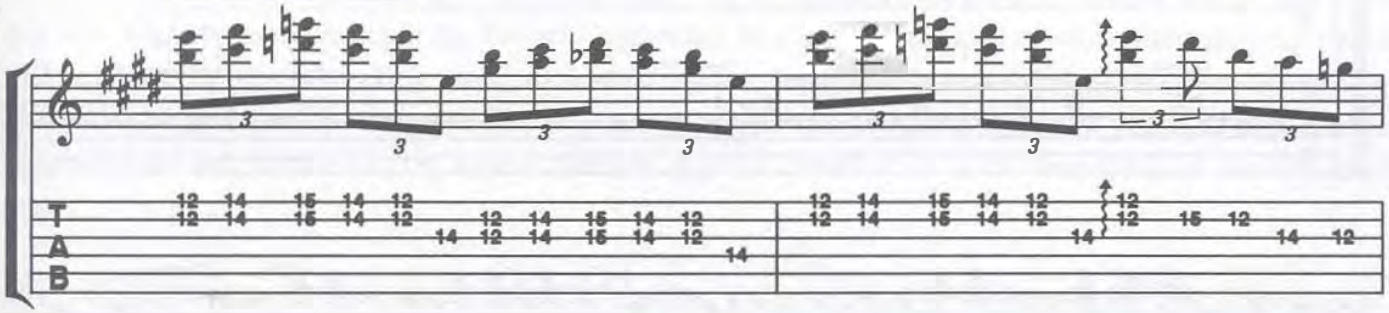
(2) the virtually legato phrase that uses E F♯ G A B C♯ and D notes, ending with a G♯ (bars 38-42) achieved by bending the open G to a G♯ behind the nut—a pet trick of Jimi's;

(3) practically pure pentatonic major usage (bars 31-35), and a bewildering combination of hammer/pull licks effected by the whammy bar and wah wah that close the solo.

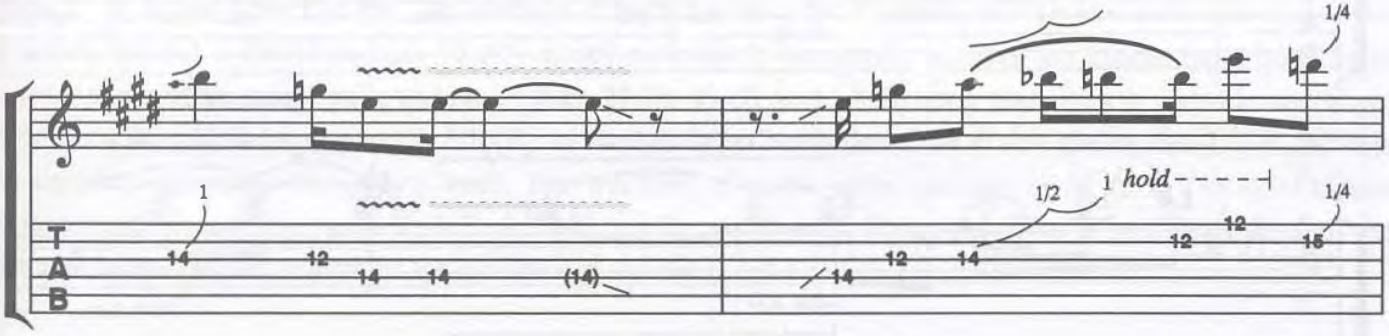

E7
trem. bar
trem. bar
1/4
1/4
1/4



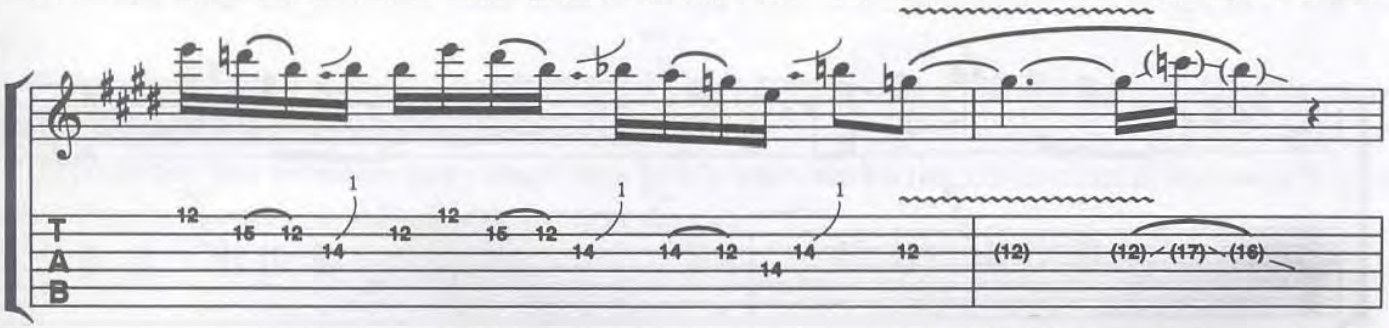
13



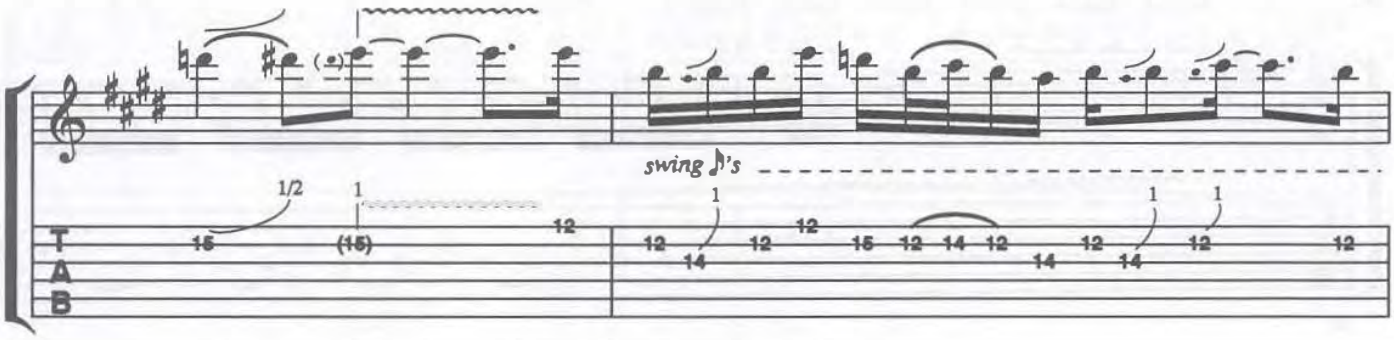
15



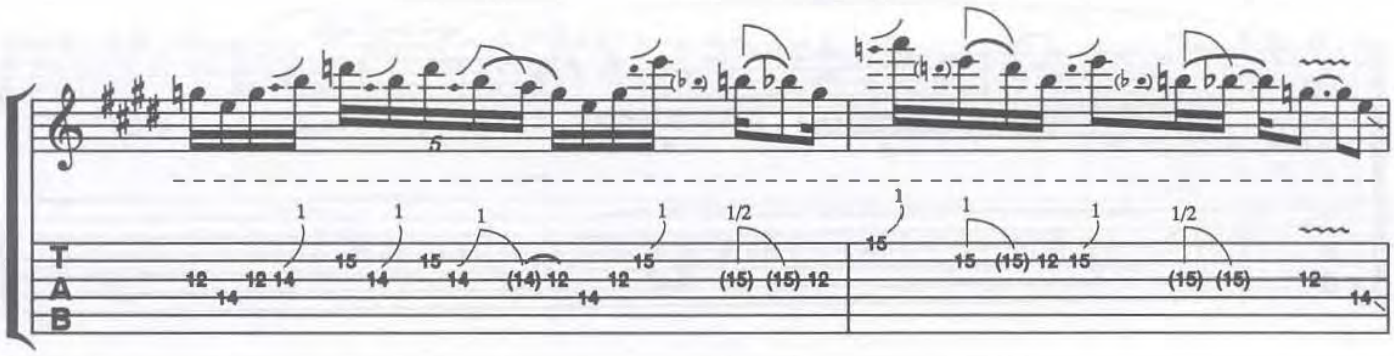
17



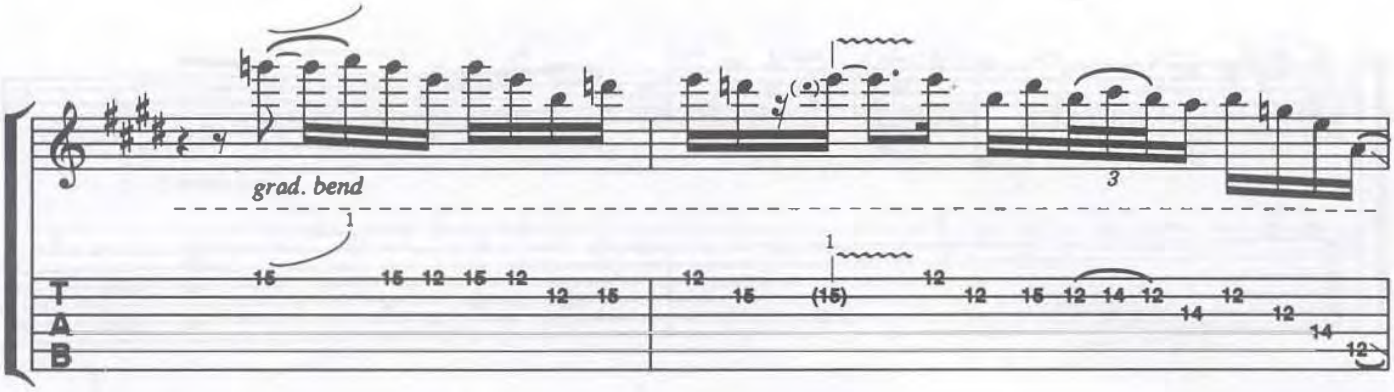
19



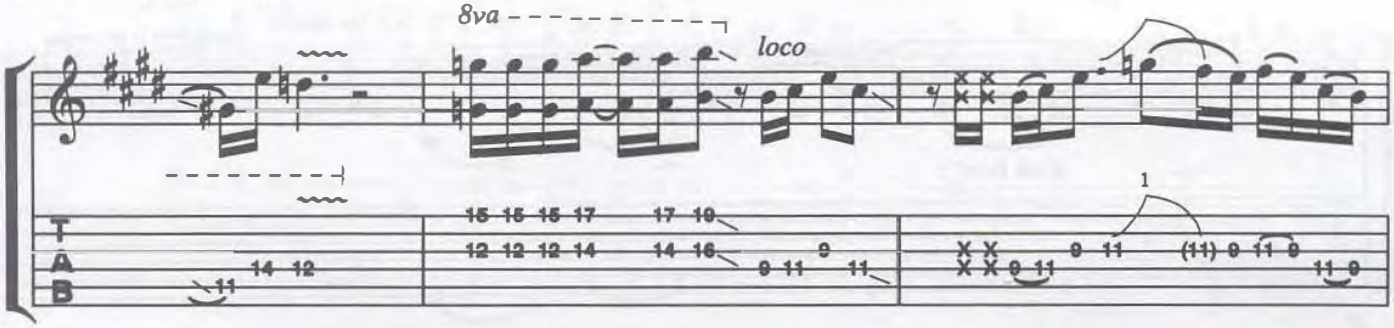
21



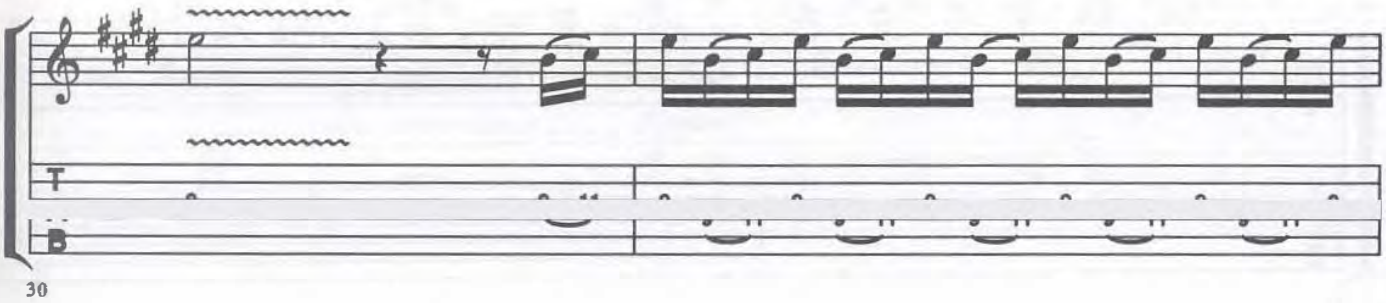
23



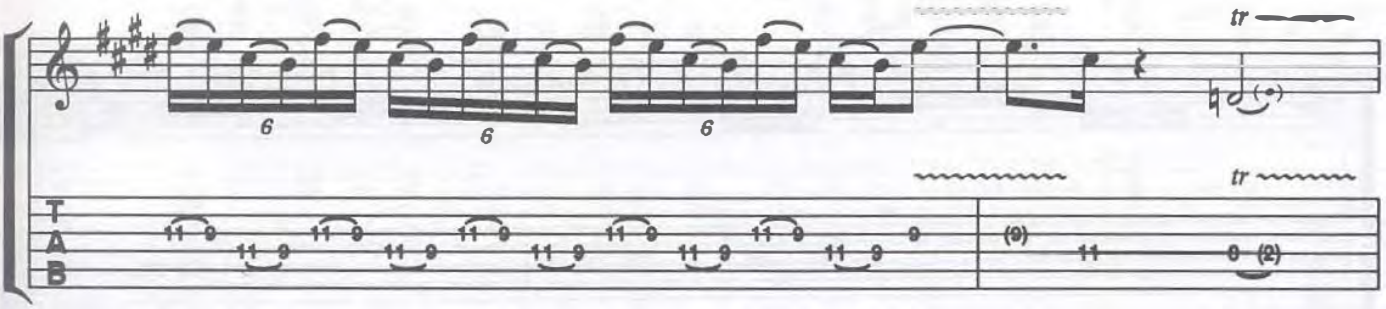
25



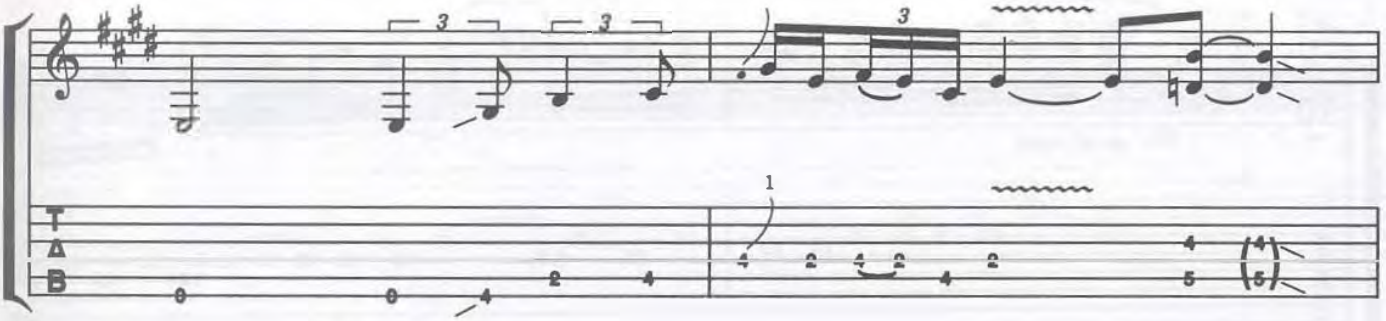
27



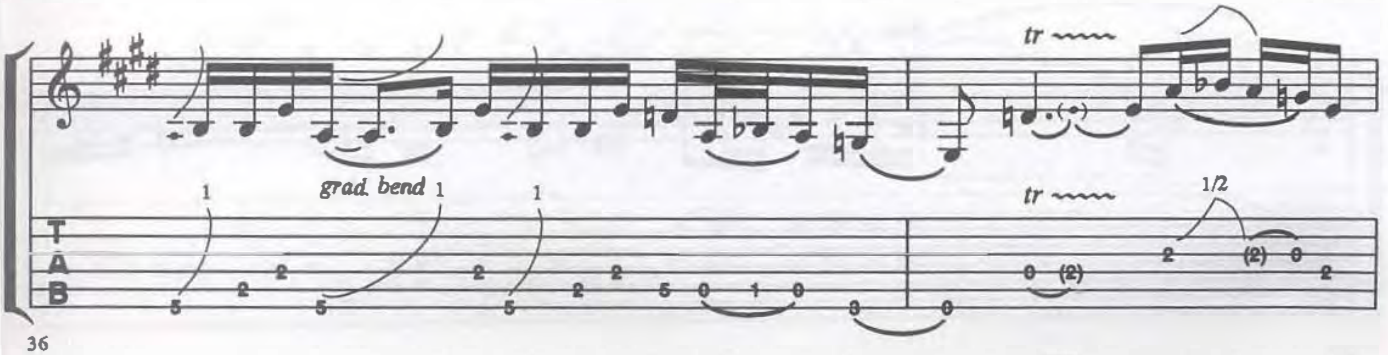
30



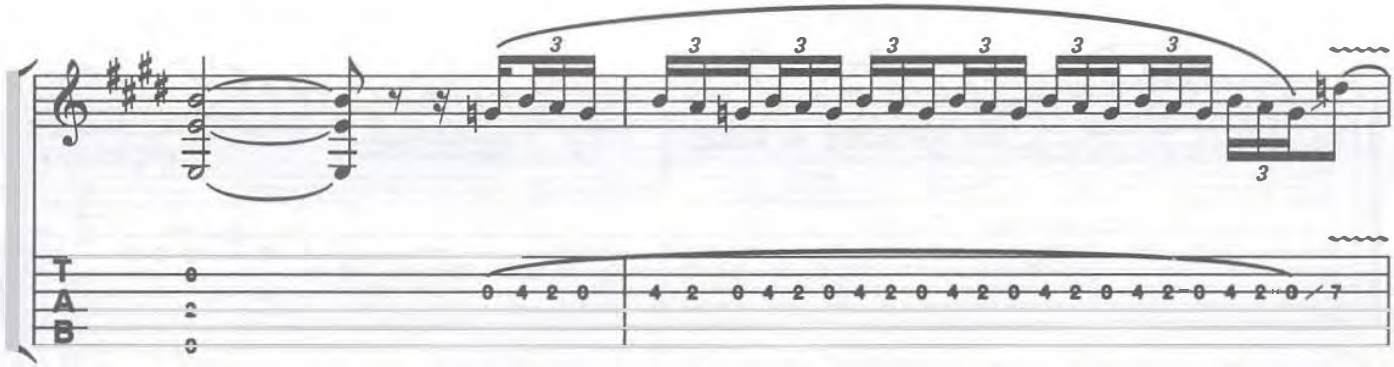
32

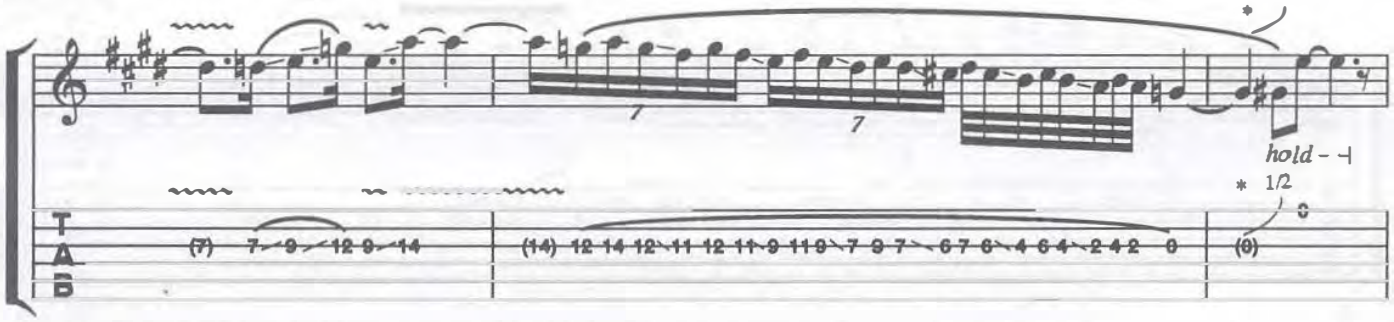


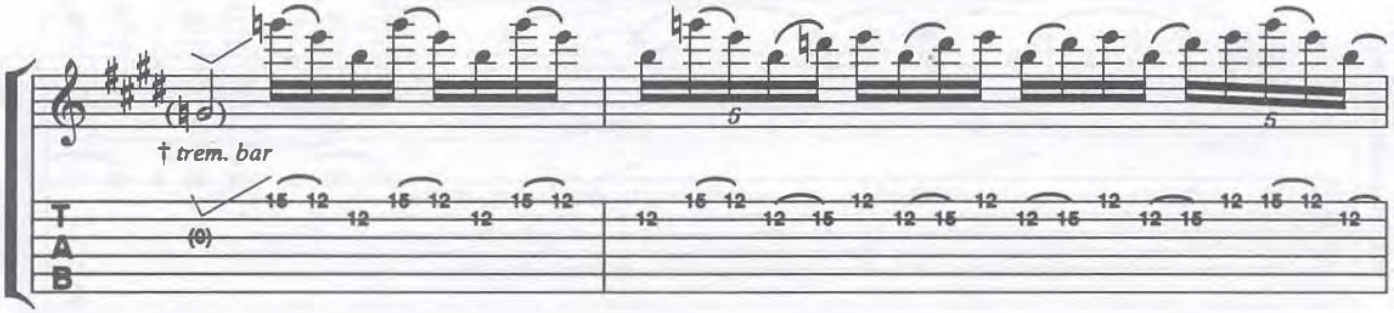
34

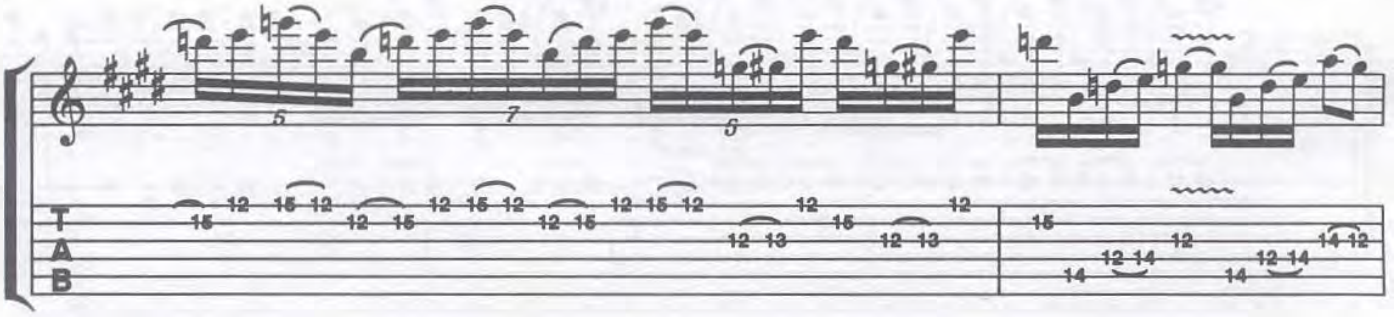


36

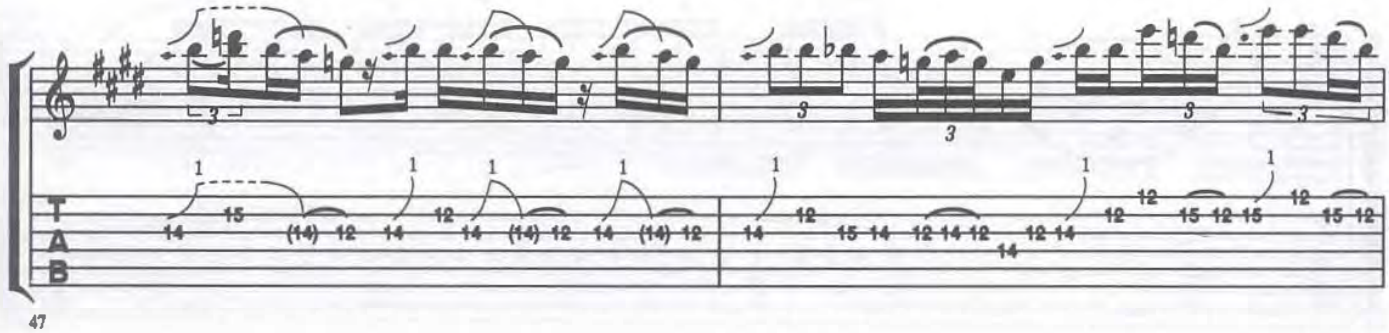


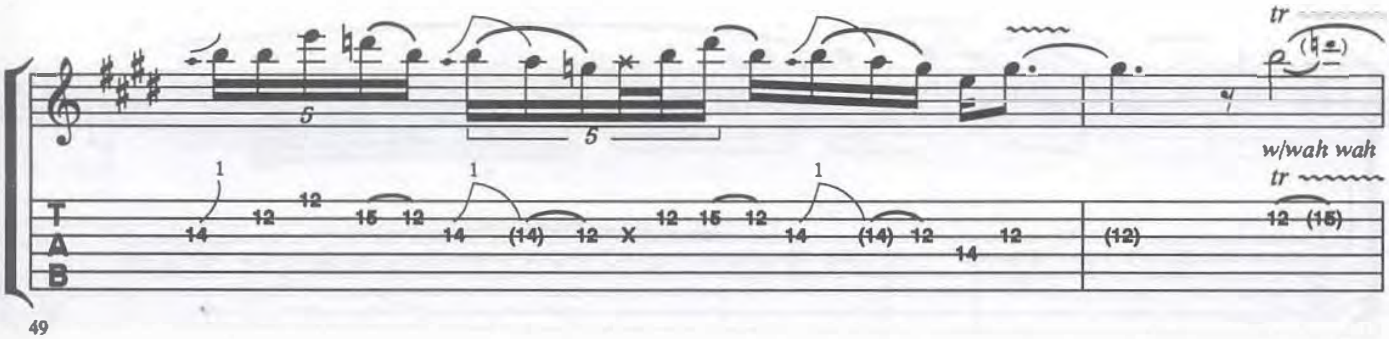


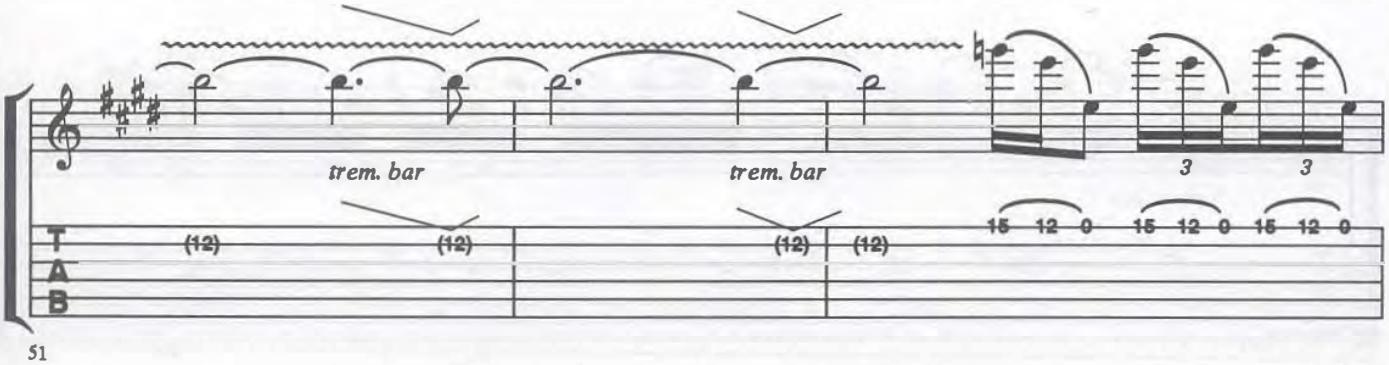


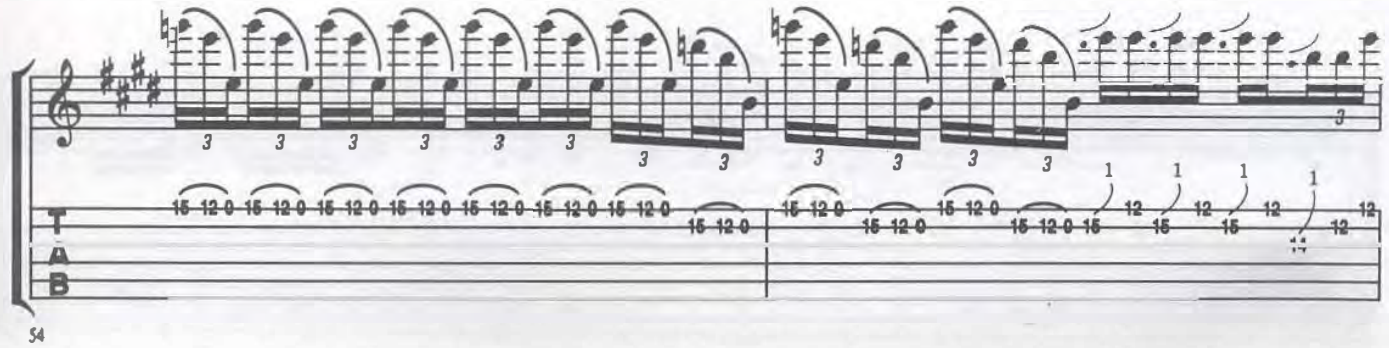


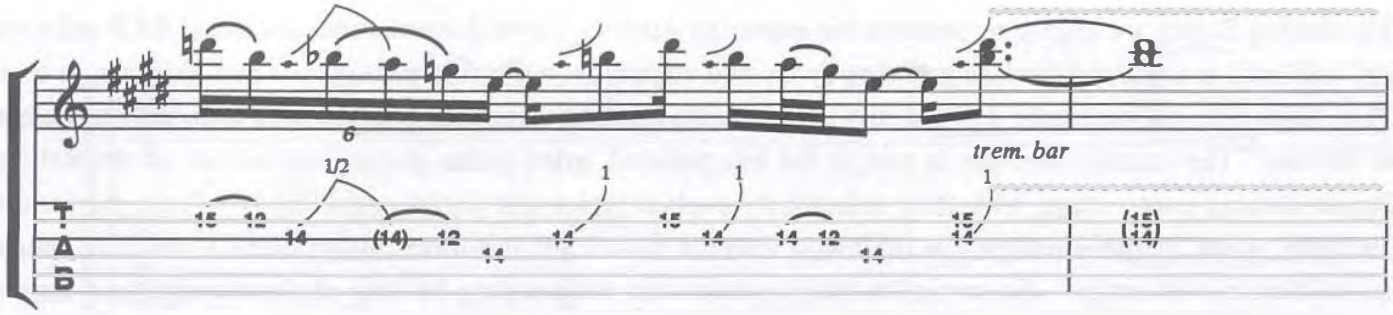
*Bend string behind nut w/pick hand.
†Depress trem. bar before striking note, gradually release.

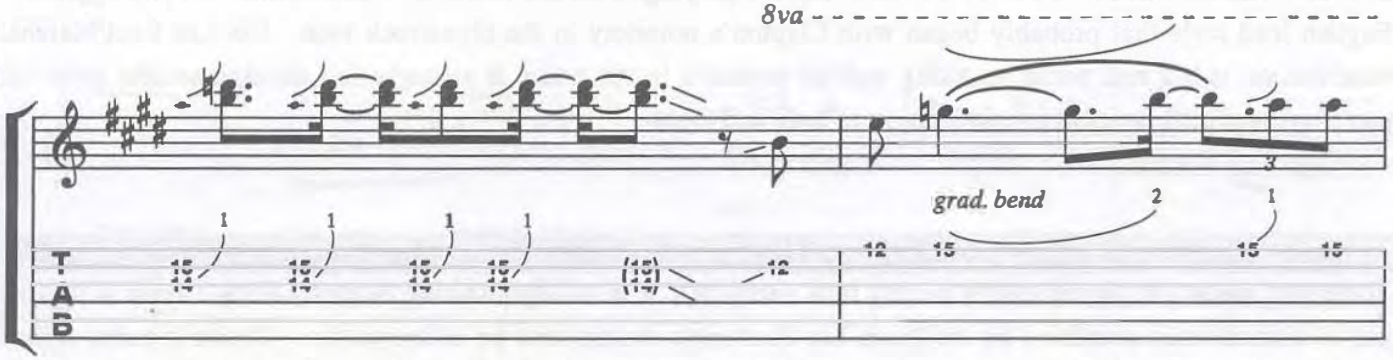

47

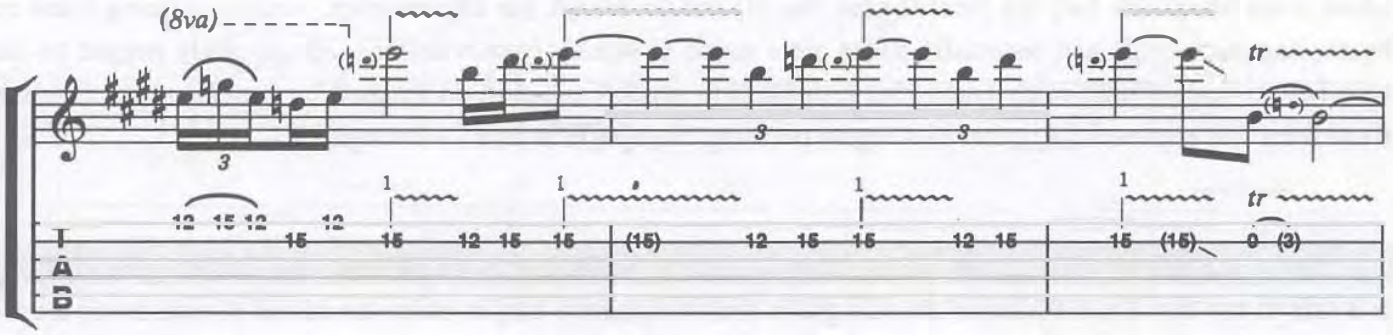

tr
w/wah wah
tr
49

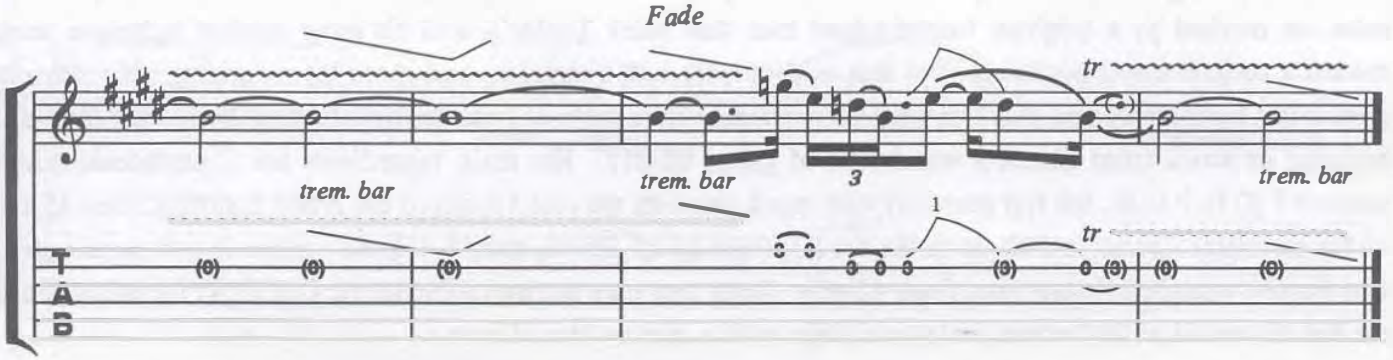

trem. bar
trem. bar
51


54


6
1/2
trem. bar
56


8va
grad. bend
58


(8va)
tr
60


Fade
trem. bar
tr
63

The Rolling Stones (Mick Taylor and Keith Richards)

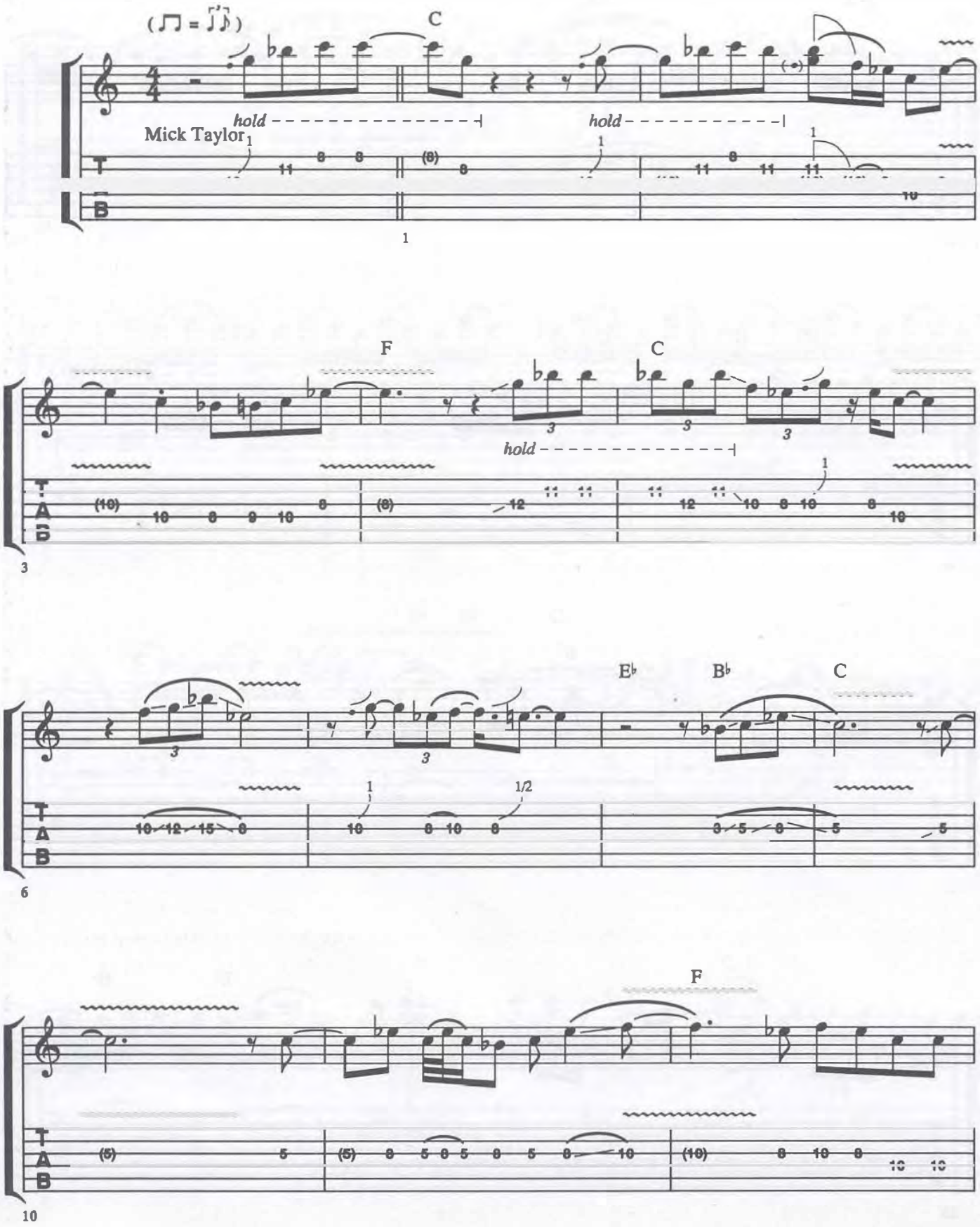
The Rolling Stones are hugely responsible for importing America's own domestic sounds (blues, R&B and rock and roll) back to a wider American audience by the mid-sixties, but not before putting their own skiffle edge to it. Their blues-oriented repertoire was raw and hard in comparison to that of the Beatles, who were the chart kings of the day. The contrast was due in part to the less polished, gritty guitar playing and sounds of the Rolling Stones sharing center stage with their infamously explicit lyrics and social commentary. From the band's inception, Keith Richards pumped its life-blood with his soulful and inventive rhythm playing which of course led to classic rock songs. His knack for playing solos that drive a song by way of double-stops and simple pentatonic lines in a worker-bee style (often reminiscent of legend Chuck Berry) contrasted with the more individualistic solos of Mick Taylor, who was busy filling Eric Clapton's shoes in John Mayall's Bluesbreakers in 1969 when he was invited to be a Stone. Mick's playing is indeed in the tradition of the bold and aggressive English lead style that probably began with Clapton's notoriety in the blues/rock vein. His Les Paul/Marshall combination is big and warm sounding and his presence in the music is strongly felt through soulful solos and part playing which eminate sophisticiation in taste and touch.

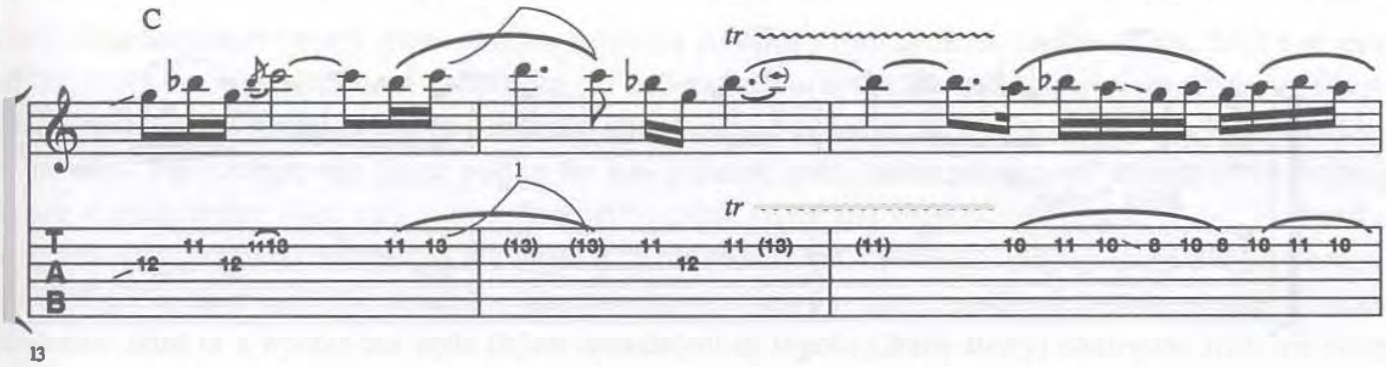
Mick Taylor

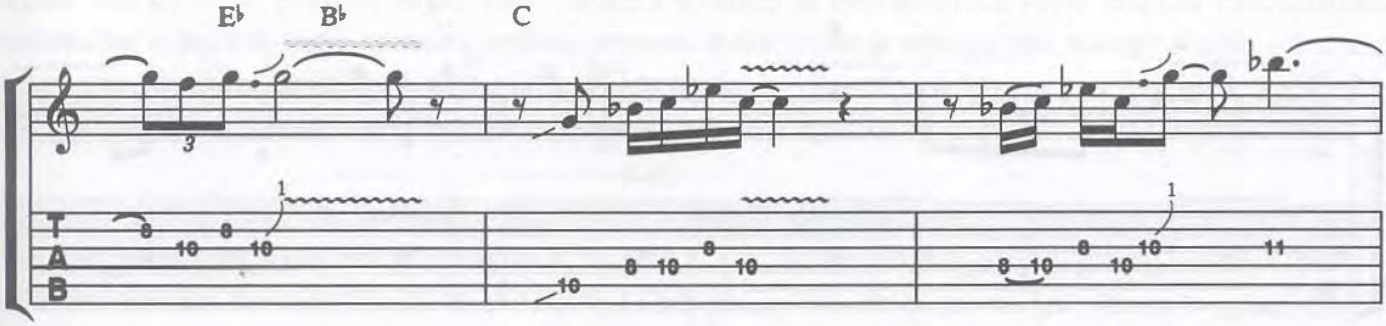
These two solos are played over a bluesy rock vamp in C a la vintage Rolling Stones. Mick Taylor is up first, and is immediately identified by the thick Les Paul neck pickup tone he is known for. Taylor's guitar style is bold and aggressive and his soulful, world-class vibrato is among the greatest ever recorded. The opening licks are demonstrative of Mick's penchant for interesting string bends and held notes within pentatonic minor positions. The lion's share of his harmonic approach tends to be straight C pentatonic minor (C E♭ F G B♭) with added notes like ♮7 (B♮, bar) 9th (bent D note, bar 14) and the 6th (A, bar 15) for spice. Legato phrasing based on bends, hammers, pulls and especially slides are a staple of Mick's improvisations. He is easily pegged by his tendency towards sliding many notes after a single pick attack—this perhaps inspired by Jimi Hendrix. See bars 6 and 8 for this approach. Another nice legato phrasing example is in bars 14 through 16.

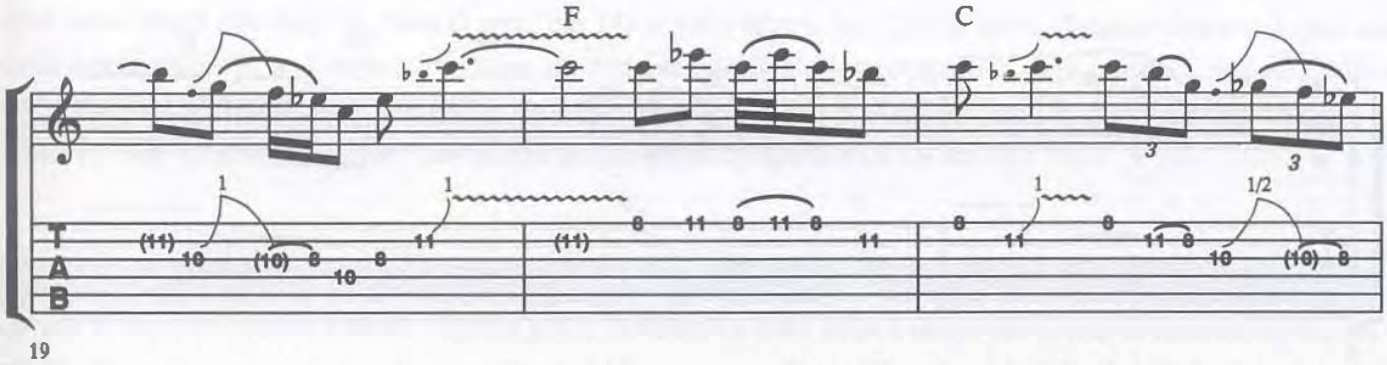
Keith Richards

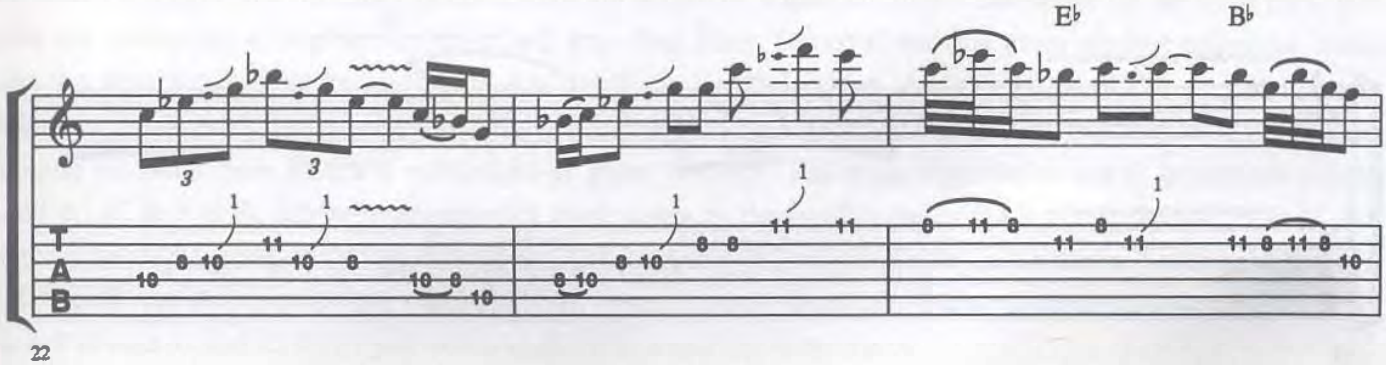
It is safe to say that Keith Richards' rhythm guitar innovations have helped shape the sound of rock music for the past 25 years. These innovations involve his world famous use of open G tuning (6=D 5=G 4=D 3=G 2=B 1=D) which in some cases epitomizes the Rolling Stones' sound. Although what he plays in this toning ranges from full chords to single note fills, his extended solos are played on a standard tuned Telecaster for the most part. His solos are marked by a brighter, harder-edged tone than Mick Taylor's, and his more modest technique tends toward a rock and roll pocket groove that is decidedly less outspoken and more teamworking. His obvious mentor is Chuck Berry and much of what he plays delivers a roots-of-rock-and-roll-feeling, borrowing from and building on stock from Chuck's warehouse of guitar history. His main ingredients are C pentatonic minor position I (C E♭ F G B♭, 8th fret position) with much stress on the root/5th bar of the B and E strings, (bars 45 and 46 for example)—bends and slides to the 5th (G) (bars 33-35, 39-40, and 45-46) and various 2-note double-stops that employ a slight 1/4 step bend (bars 42-48). Keith also uses pentatonic major (C D E G A) for balance, and the lick in bars 61 and 62 offers pentatonic major with a country blues flavor.

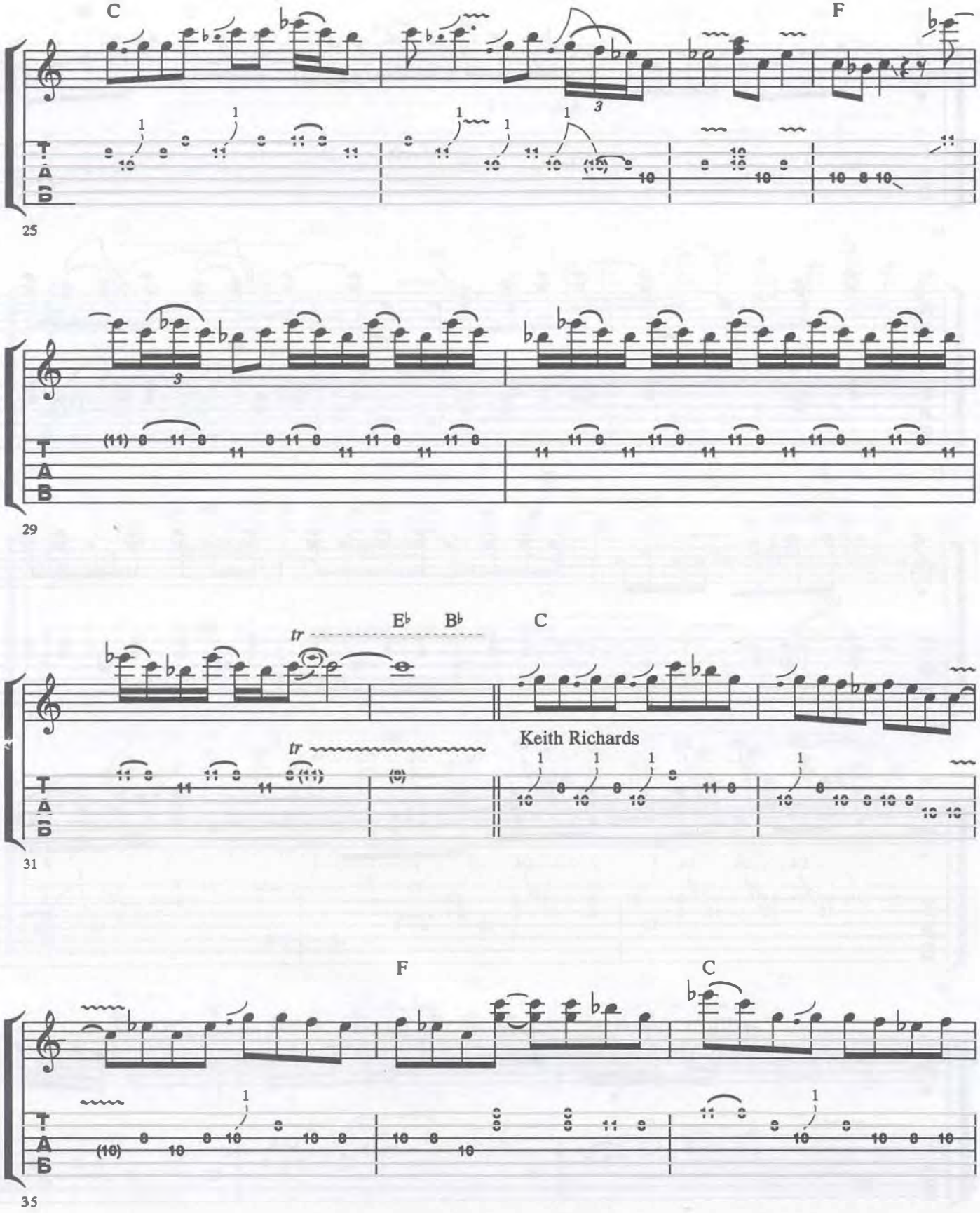

Mick Taylor
C
hold
hold
F
C
hold
E♭
B♭
C
F

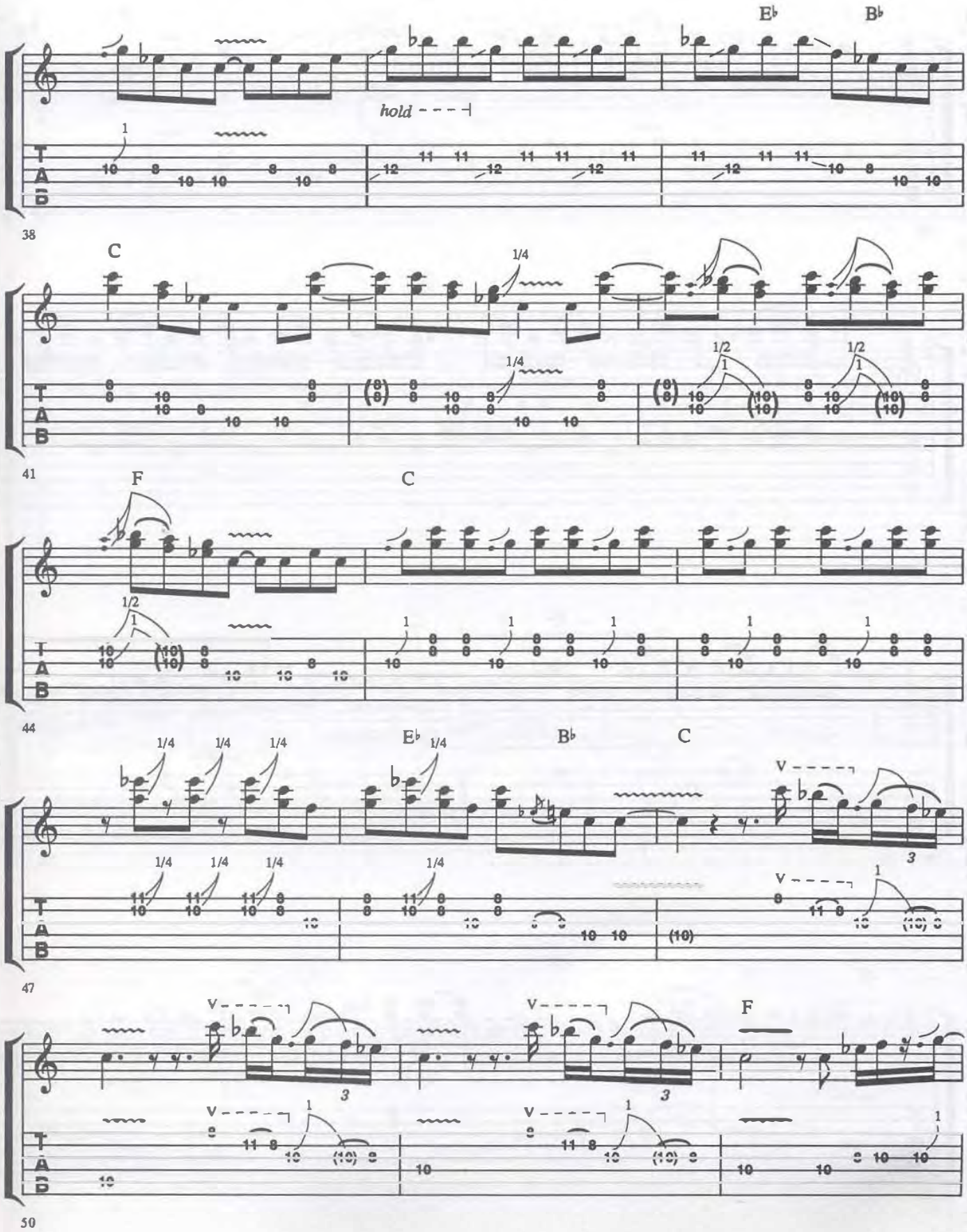

C
tr
tr
13

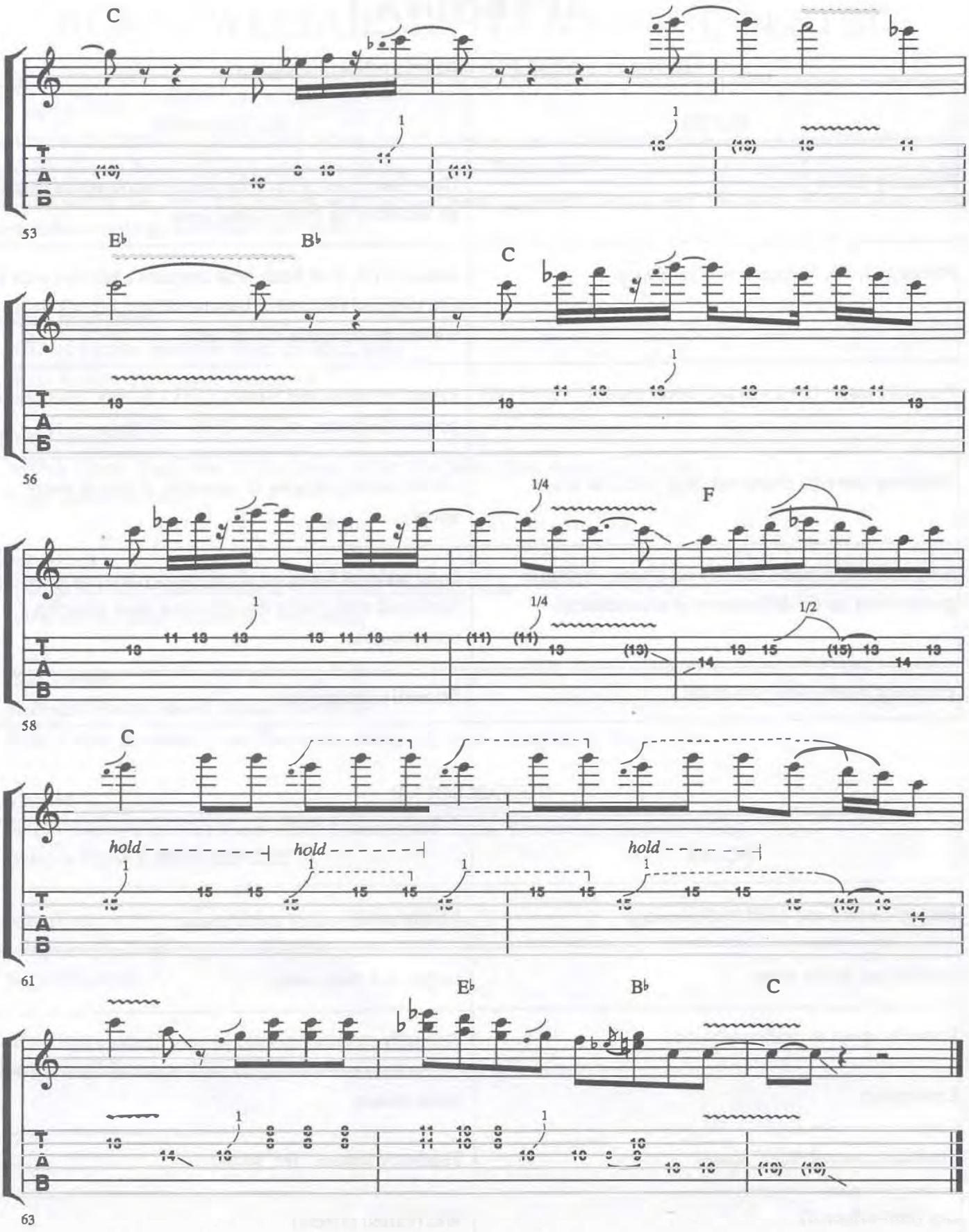

E♭
B♭
C
16


F
C
19


E♭
B♭
22


C
F
25
29
E♭
B♭
C
tr
Keith Richards
31
F
C
35


E♭
B♭
hold
38
C
1/4
41
F
C
44
E♭
B♭
C
47
F
50


C
53
E♭
B♭
C
56
1/4
F
1/4
1/2
58
C
hold
hold
hold
61
E♭
B♭
C
63

ISBN 0-7579-0987-6
9 780757 909870

Real Rock Guitar

A Classic Rock Bible of the '60s and '70s

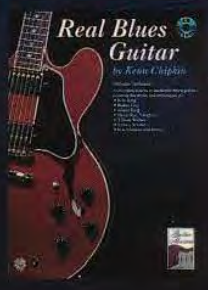
by Kenn Chipkin

In the mid to late '60s a new generation of guitarists began to fuse the influences of blues greats such as Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters, and Buddy Guy with the volume, energy, and attitude of the rock generation. It is from this unique blend of sounds and cultures that modern rock guitar was born.

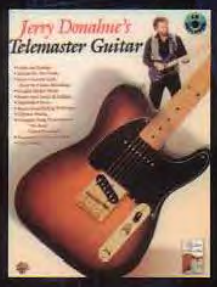
In this book, the licks, styles, and techniques of the classic rock generation of guitarists are revealed and explained. The included recording contains every music example—performed with the authentic tones, techniques, and equipment of the original artists. All of the music is presented in standard notation and tab.

Printed in USA

Also Available in the "Masters" Series:



Real Blues Guitar (0232B) (Book and CD)



Jerry Donahue's Telemaster Guitar (5209A) (Book and CD)

Cool Blues & Hot Jazz Guitar by Adrian Ingram (5208A) (Book and CD)

Mark Hanson's Fingerstyle Wizard (EL96123CD) The Wizard of Oz for Solo Guitar (Book and CD)

Bob Brozman's Bottleneck Blues Guitar (EL96164CD) (Book and CD)

Peppino D'Agostino's New Acoustic Guitar (EL96102CD) (Book and CD)

WARNER BROS. PUBLICATIONS
Warner Music Group
An AOL Time Warner Company
15800 N.W. 48th Avenue • Miami, Florida 33014

IMP
International Music Publications Limited
Griffin House, 161 Hammersmith Road, London W6 8BS, England

6 54979 05286 9

$21.95
in USA

0718B